Tanong ng Bayan / A20

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Kidnappers free Davao businessman

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GUYITO WILD HUNT

■ Metro / A24

3 KMU men arrested for flying kites

■ World / A12

Bush bulge mystery: Wire or wrinkle?

■ Entertainment / A33

Edu and Ai Ai: 'Twas a date

RP stock market: Asia's bright light or black hole?

THE PHILIPPINE stock market appears to be the darling of foreign investors at the moment, outperforming all regional markets and the major ones alike.

Since the start of the year, the 33-share Philippine Stock Exchange Composite Index has risen 22 percent, followed by the key Jakarta stock index at 18 percent. In contrast,

RP STOCK/ A22

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Casino money OK, but not 'jueteng,' says bishop

By Blanche S. Rivera

WHY is it OK to accept money from casinos but not from "jueteng"?

Because casinos take from the rich people while jueteng robs the poor.

CASINO/ A22

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Generals, legislators linked to AFP graft

Ex-military comptroller has list, says retired exec

By Fe Zamora

ONE MAY call it Garic's List and it supposedly includes generals, legislators and at least one presidential candidate in the May 2004 elections who allegedly benefited from corruption in the Armed Forces.

A retired military officer told the INQUIRER the one who has the list is embattled Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia, a former Armed Forces comptroller now facing investigation for alleged unexplained wealth.

Garcia is known in the military by his nickname "Garic."

The retired officer, who spoke to the INQUIRER on condition of anonymity, said the information held by Garcia had allowed him to go scot free in spite of an earlier investigation by the Armed Forces into his alleged unexplained wealth.

The source said he talked to Garcia himself two months ago.

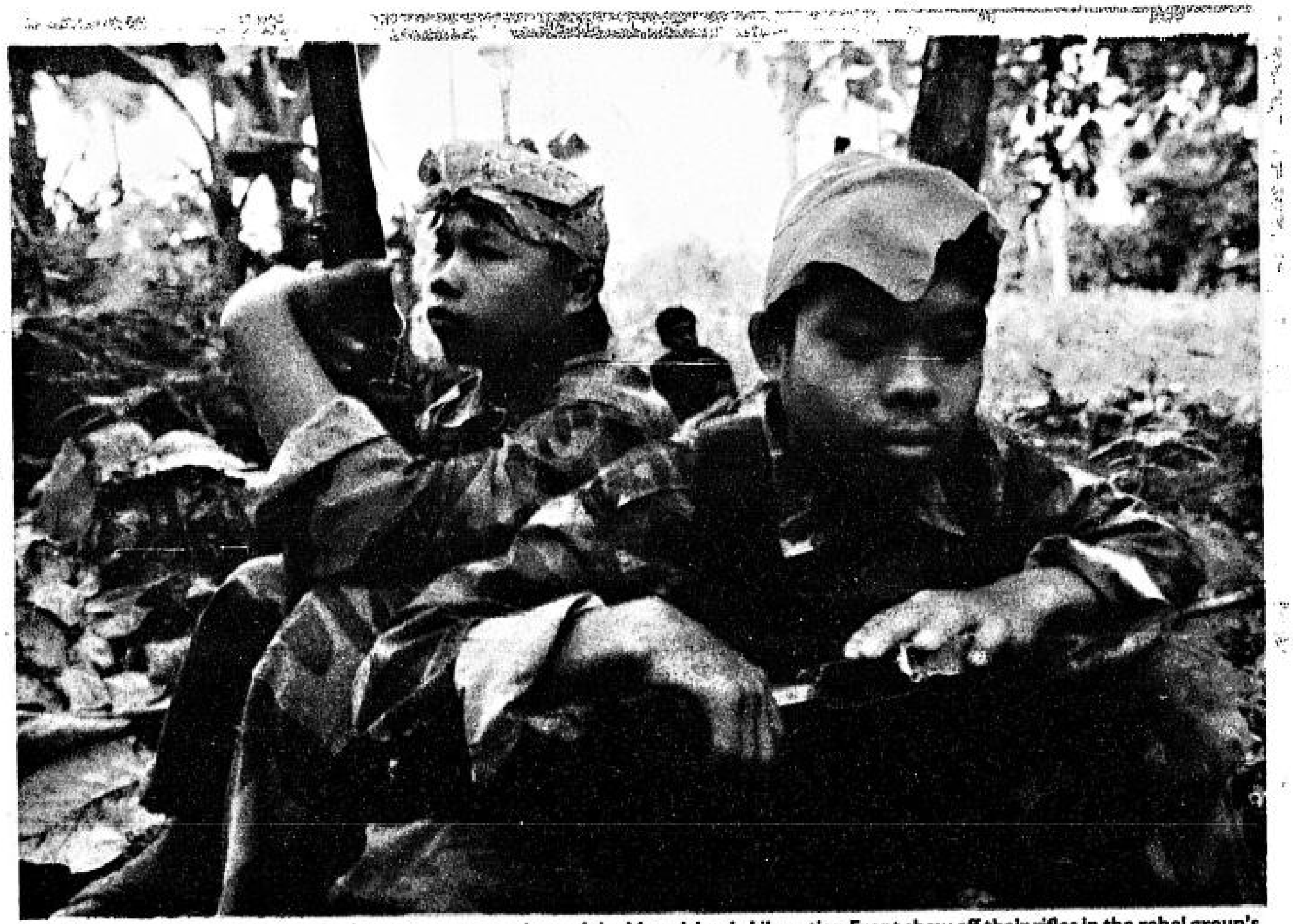
"Garcia is protected all around because he is just a tool. He is not a decision maker," said the officer.

Garcia is facing an investigation by the Ombudsman for alleged unexplained wealth. He has also been asked to appear at a House committee hearing today on his alleged bank deposits abroad.

The source alleged that Garcia has been a green card holder since 1989, and that his wife Clarita was an American citizen.

"There is already a question of

GENERALS/ A21



GOING to war early in their youth, these teenage members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front show off their rifles in the rebel group's Camp Darapanan.

PHOTOS FROM REUTERS

MILF rift hinders peace process

CAMP DARAPANAN—Several slouching Moro rebels spring to attention as visitors approach the makeshift meeting room in a corner of their camp.

Inside, Murad Ibrahim's bookish appearance and gentle voice belie his status as the head of the country's largest Moro rebel group and one of the country's most powerful men.

"We are solid," Murad says during an interview with Reuters, expressing certainty that he has the full support of his at least 12,000 fighters.

Shows of unity are more important than ever for the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) as it returns to peace talks with the government in Kuala Lumpur after a three-year break and tries to shake off allegations that its camps are a training ground for militants.

But deepening divisions within the MILF between moderates and Middle East-influenced radicals could turn out to be one of the biggest obstacles to ending the 30-year-old conflict.

The risk is that the MILF may splinter if its leadership signs a peace deal that falls short of the long-cherished goal of in-

MILF RIFT/ A20

MURAD: Full support from 12,000 fighters.

Colleagues in military tell Robles to shut up

By Fe Zamora

REX ROBLES is hardly the kind of man you can tell to shut up.

But the retired Navy commodore said yesterday that was exactly the message he had been getting from his former colleagues in the military and from ex-classmates in the Philippine Military Academy—shut your mouth, please.

A few congressmen and Malacañang officials have conveyed the same appeal to him, Robles said.

Not a stranger to controversy, Robles said this week that US authorities were investigating two generals and three Cabinet-level officials—apart from Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia—for supposedly maintaining huge bank accounts in the United States.

American authorities reportedly launched the probe after detaining Garcia's son, Ian Carl, at a US airport for not declaring that he was carrying $100,000 in cash.

Garcia is scheduled to appear today before the House committee on national defense, which will conduct an inquiry into his alleged huge dollar remittances and unexplained wealth.

Robles said he was not "attacking any person" but just stating a few facts.

"But there's an eerie silence in the military. Only three persons have called to tell me to go on. All the others are telling me to shut up," he told the INQUIRER.

He said not one of his classmates from PMA Class '65 had offered moral support.

But three PMA graduates—Ed Santos of Class '66, Jess Paredes of Class '71, and Robert Lee of Class '81—have urged him to "keep on talking," Robles said.

A former Cabinet-level official who is now a legislator called up Robles for another reason.

"I think he just wanted to be sure he was not one of the Cabinet-level officials in the US report," Robles laughed.

He said he had nothing much to say because "I really don't

COLLEAGUES/ A21

Studies on prayer power stir controversy

WHEN you ask God for something, does He think it over, lay down conditions or consult advisers?

Can prayer heal? Does the intercession of a favorite saint—or evangelist—actually work?

In 2001, two researchers and a Columbia University fertility expert published a startling finding in a respected medical journal: Women undergoing fertility treatment who had been prayed for by Christian groups were two times more likely to have a successful pregnancy than those who had not.

Three years later, after one of the researchers pleaded guilty to conspiracy in an unrelated business fraud, Columbia is investigating the study. Doubts about its original conclusions have added to the debate over the deeply controversial issue of whether prayer can cure illness.

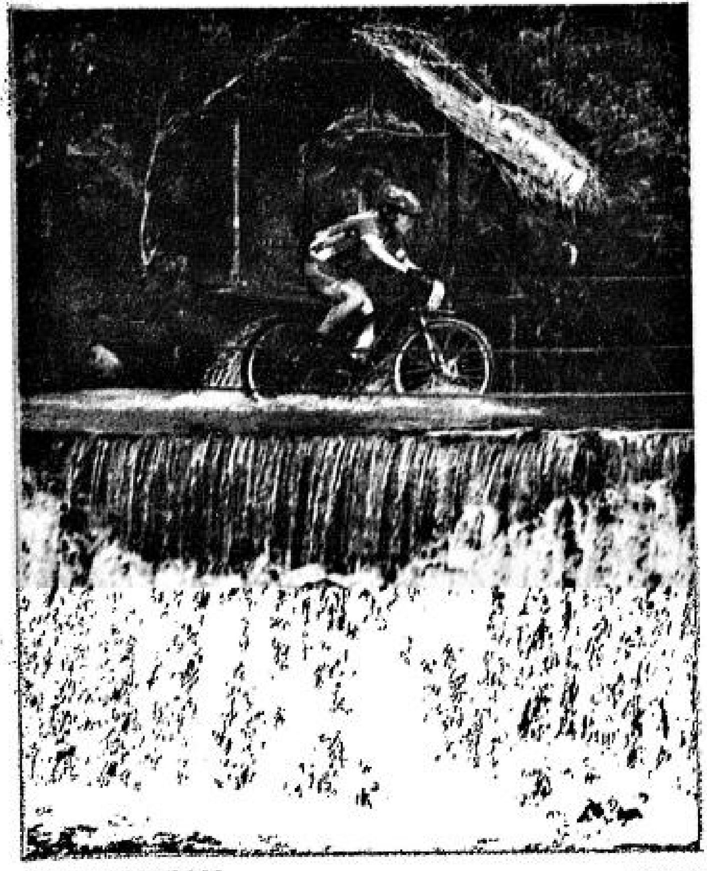
Critics express outrage that the US federal government, which has contributed $2.3 million over the last four years to prayer research, would continue to spend taxpayer money to study something which, they say, has nothing to do with science.

"Intercessory prayer presupposes some supernatural intervention that is, by definition, beyond the reach of science," Dr. Richard J. McNally, a Harvard psychologist, pointed out. "It is just a nonstarter, in my opinion, a total waste of time and money."

Since 2000, at least 10 studies of intercessory prayer have been carried out by researchers at institutions, including the Mind/Body Medical Institute, a nonprofit clinic near Boston run by a Harvard-trained cardiologist, as well as Duke University and the University of Washington.

Even those who defend prayer research concede that such studies are difficult. For one thing, no

STUDIES/ A20



FLUID MOTION

JESS YUSON

Filipino rider Maritess Bitbit crosses a river on Mt. Magarwak during the 10th Asian Mountain Bike Cross-Country competition held in Puerto Princesa City in Palawan. *(See story in Sports, Page A26.)*

Food coupons could hardly alleviate poverty

By Amando Doronila

ANALYSIS

JUST six months into her second administration, two shocks have jolted President Macapagal-Arroyo. The shocks did not come from the usual culprits—"destabilizing" forces such as the political opposition and coup plotters.

The latest was the Social Weather Stations survey in August that found that the incidence of hunger nationwide had jumped dramatically. One out of every seven household heads polled said his family had nothing to eat at least once in the three months before the survey, triple the number the previous year.

The finding spelled one ominous word—HUNGER.

The shock followed closely the warning by a group of economists at the University of the Philippines two months ago that the country faced economic collapse in two to three years unless the fiscal deficit was dramatically reduced with revenue-producing reforms and drastic cost-cutting measures.

The administration has passed its first 100 days of its second term and is nearing its six-month mark, but it has little to show that it has instituted fiscal reform measures to stem the tide of a widening deficit. It has not imparted a sense of urgency to the public and it seems to have been caught in the lethargy of "business as usual."

While it is true that this administration hurdled the obstruction put up by the opposition that tried to block the President's proclamation in June, this time she can no longer make the opposition and the coup plotters the scapegoats for her woes and for the dire manifestations of poverty.

The statistics on hunger are grim. The incidence of hunger in Mindanao jumped to 23 percent, the highest in the country and about four times the 5.3 percent

FOOD/ A22

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao including Palawan will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/10/11/04

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

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Second FRONT PAGE

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Foreign investors score $1B bond deal

By Clarissa S. Batino

DISMAYED by the Philippines' mishandling of the $1-billion bond deal in early September, foreign investors have threatened to boycott the country's future sovereign borrowings, banking and finance sources said.

They said the Philippines' credibility as a borrower had been put in serious doubt, which could make it more difficult and expensive for the Arroyo administration to access foreign financial markets at a time when its huge fiscal deficit requires frequent and substantial borrowings.

Global players such as GIC (The Government of Singapore Investment Corp.), Hypo Verins Bank, Blue Bay Asset Management, Ashmore Investment Management Ltd., Rubicon Asset Management Ltd, Fortress Fund, Banyan Asset Management and Emerging Markets Sovereign Fund strongly criticized the bond deal during a recent roadshow.

The fund managers complained that hedge funds or short-term players may have been favored in terms of bond allocations at the expense of long-term investors who wanted more allocations. They also accused hedge funds of "short selling" the bonds before they were even issued.

"If not addressed, the issue could well lead to limiting the country's access to long-term institutional funds as opposed to hedge funds, which tend to create more volatility in the markets. This will mean more expensive issues in the future regardless of a steady credit rating," an internal memo said.

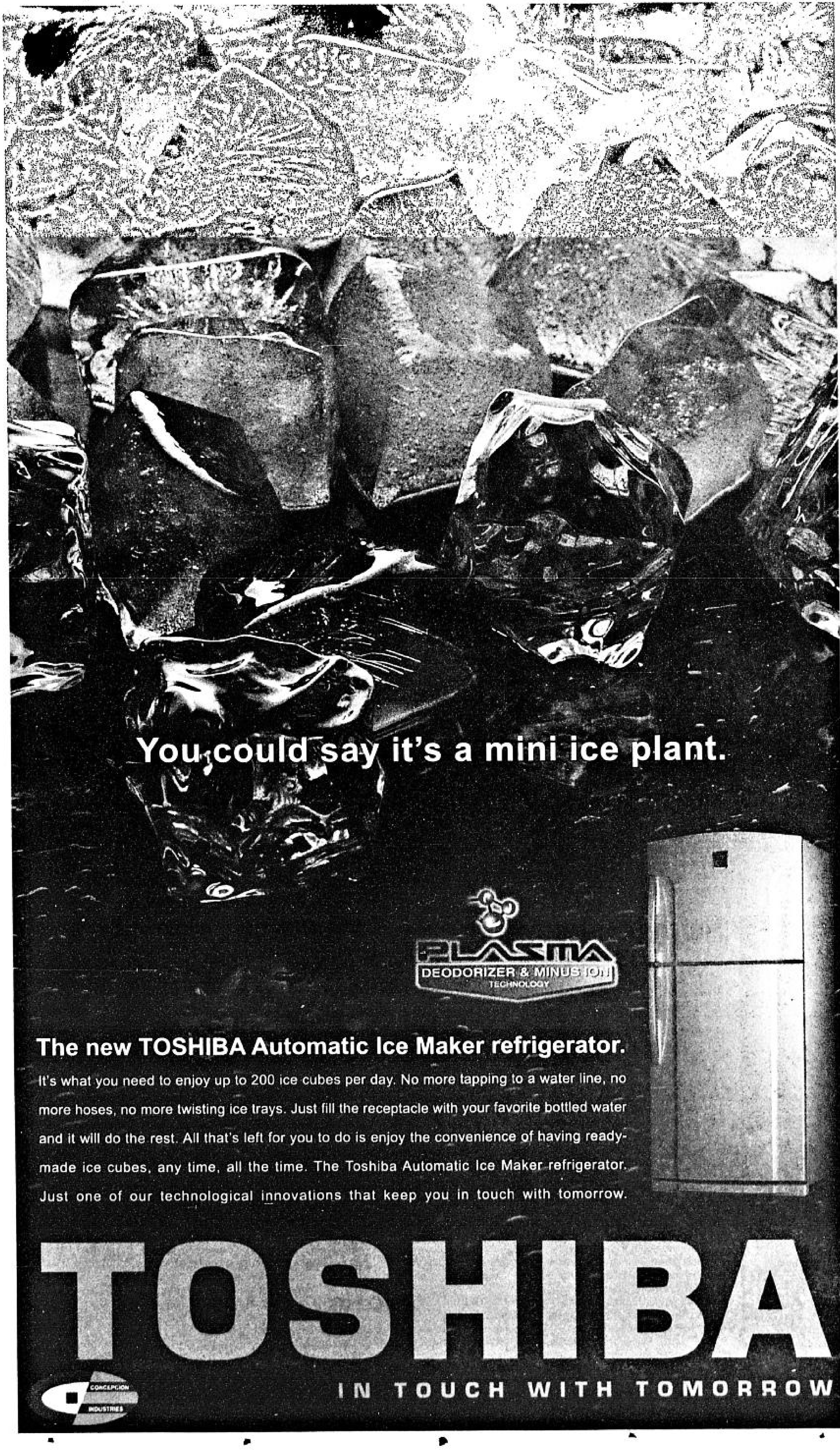
The foreign portfolio investors met with Finance Secretary Juanita Amatong and Trade Secretary Cesar Purisima during the roadshow in Hong Kong, Singapore, London and New York from Sept. 22 to Oct. 4. Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura joined the New York leg.

Combined, these asset managers hold a big part of the outstanding Philippine bonds estimated at close to $20 billion. The Philippines is the largest debt issuer in Asia next to Japan.

The fund managers and portfolio investors said the heavy discounts adversely affected their portfolios and served as a disincentive for taking long positions on the bonds. "Investors thought the deal could have been issued 2 to 3 points better," the memo said.

The big discount angered those that had large and long exposures in ROPs like GIC, HPV, Blue Bay, Ashmore, Rubicon, Fortress, Banyan, EM Sovereign, among others.

"A number of funds are considering boycotting the next ROP issue. They felt cheated by the last transaction saying this was not the way to reward long-term investors in Philippine bonds for having supported the past issues in a big way," said the internal memo among the IRO, banks and key officials.



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CONCEPCION INDUSTRIES

Poor buying more booze, cigs—study

By Carlito Pablo

WITH barely enough money to buy food, the poor are spending more to maintain their vices like drinking and smoking, a study said.

The study by Manila-based economic and political analyst Peter Wallace showed that the poor and those barely out of poverty accounted for an increasing share of spending on alcohol, cigarettes and tobacco (ACT).

Wallace noted that from 76.7 percent in 1997, the share of the D and E classes in total tobacco consumption increased to 82.8 percent in 2000.

On the consumption of alcohol beverages, the share of the D and E classes rose from 72.7 percent in 1997 to 75.7 percent in 2000.

The Wallace paper dated September 2004 proposed an increase in ACT tax rates to discourage the poor from consuming more cigarettes and alcoholic drinks and to generate additional revenues for the government.

"A double win for the government," was how the Wallace paper described the proposed hike in 'sin' taxes.

The paper noted that the University of the Philippines' College of Medicine estimated that P27 billion was spent annually on public health expenditures for smoking-related illnesses, with mostly the poor being afflicted.

"So dissuading the poor from smoking through higher tax rates on cigarettes benefits society—the money saved by the poor by not smoking can be used for their families' basic needs like food," the Wallace paper said.

Thus, the government "gets more money from higher cigarette taxes and spends less of taxpayer money on smoking-related diseases," the paper said.

The Wallace paper noted that cigarette and alcohol manufacturers had introduced into the market lower-priced brands that have, in effect, allowed them to take advantage of the present tax system on "vice products" and, at the same time, lure more consumers.

The paper was referring to the shift to specific taxation in 1997, but whose rates were not adjusted to inflation rates in subsequent years.

Vested interests behind oust Garcia move?

MALACAÑANG yesterday took up the cudgels for embattled Government Service and Insurance System president and general manager Winston Garcia, saying that vested interest groups may be behind the call for his ouster.

In an interview with DZBB radio, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said "it was possible that accusations being hurled against Garcia were coming from influential groups."

This could be why President Macapagal-Arroyo was still "weighing carefully" the demand of several sectors that Garcia be replaced at the GSIS.

"The President is giving him the benefit of the doubt," Bunye said.

The press secretary's comment bolstered Garcia's claim that the sustained attack against him was coming from "crooks in government," specifically private interest groups that lost out in the government reinsurance business.

During his term, the GSIS has aggressively pursued the reinsurance business. Garcia, scion of a politically influential family from Cebu, balked at the high premiums being charged by private reinsurance firms that had a lock on the business for years.

In the last three years, the GSIS controlled 90 percent of the P3-billion government reinsurance business, leaving only 10 percent for private reinsurance firms to divide among themselves. GSIS earnings from reinsurance rocketed to P1.848 billion in 2003 from P486 million in 2000.

Garcia said he hurt the reinsurance firms by inadvertently taking away their business.

Gil Cabacungan Jr.

PCPO-MALACAÑANG PHOTO
FUTURE

PRESIDENT Arroyo, with Energy Secretary Vince Perez, switches on National Transmission Corp.'s Leyte-Bohol Interconnection Project which would generate more power in Central Visayas.

Subsidy removal no rate hike–DOE

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE DEPARTMENT of Energy yesterday justified the removal of subsidies from residential customers of Manila Electric Co., saying it was not a rate hike but was designed to reflect the true cost of electricity.

"The removal of inter-class subsidies is meant to reflect the true cost of power delivery. It is not another rate hike, and is revenue neutral for both Napocor and Meralco," Energy Secretary Vince Perez told the INQUIRER.

The Energy Regulatory Commission approved last week the removal of the 40 percent subsidy shouldered by industrial consumers and enjoyed by households, small industrial users and government hospitals as part of the three-stage phaseout mandated under the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001.

Perez defended the ERC decision as "part of the ongoing effort to have a rate level that reflects the true cost of distributing power. It is common wisdom that delivering electricity to a large single user costs less than delivering to 1,000 households."

With the removal of the subsidy, households consuming more than 100 kilowatts of electricity monthly would have to pay an additional 28.52 centavos per kWh; small industrial users, 40.62 centavos per kWh, and government hospitals, 43.56 centavos per kWh beginning this month.

In contrast, the electricity bills of large commercial users will go down by 27.83 centavos; extra large industrial users by 25.22 centavos per kWh, and medium commercial users by 23.12 centavos per kWh.

But Perez explained that the removal of the cross-subsidies would not add to the bottom lines of National Power Corp. or Meralco but would allow businesses to cut their monthly bills.

"As more large industrial users consume competitively priced electricity, the commercial and industrial consumers can deliver lower cost production and services," Perez said.

Businessmen had long complained that the cross-subsidies made the country's power rates one of the most expensive in the region and the rate distortions had turned off potential investors.

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RP to seek return of wanted man

THE PHILIPPINES is set to file a formal extradition request with the United States to get back Hedelito Trinidad, a medical doctor who is the third most-wanted kidnapper in the country, police sources said Sunday.

Trinidad allegedly financed kidnap gangs in the Philippines and had an P850,000 bounty on his head.

Police and justice department sources said the Philippine government will "initiate actions for his extradition."

Trinidad was arrested by US Federal Bureau of Investigation agents at his residence in West Covina near Los Angeles, California, on Thursday, officials of the Department of Interior and Local Government told the INQUIRER .

"He is a big catch," Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes said in an interview on ANC television. "He was quite elusive but he was entrapped. The entrapment was beautiful."

DILG officials said Trinidad was arrested while trying to sell a van to an FBI agent who had posed as a buyer.

The National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force (Naktf) and the FBI had been working since March to get their hands on Trinidad.

They got a break last month after members of the Filipino community in West Covina told them their prey was engaged in the vehicle buy-and-sell business in the area as a cover, the officials said.

Trinidad will remain under FBI custody pending the formal extradition request from the Department of Justice, they said.

"He was on the run," Reyes said. "Sometimes, he would go to Canada. Apparently, he got wind of our efforts to get him so he tried to lie low but through the information of the Filipino community there, we were able to get him."

DILG officials said the government plans to give awards to the five FBI agents who helped collar Trinidad.

"The FBI played a big role and we want to acknowledge their participation," Reyes said. *Christian V. Esguerra; Reuters, AFP*

Different guns killed leftists, cops find

By Christian V. Esguerra

DIFFERENT guns, same assassin?

Different firearms were used to kill former leftist leaders Arturo Tabara, Romulo "Ka Rolly" Kintanar and Filemon "Ka Popoy" Lagman, according to the forensics test conducted by the Philippine National Police Crime Laboratory on the slugs collected from the different crime scenes.

Despite this finding, Senior Supt. Rodolfo "Boogie" Mendoza, Task Force Tabara chief, said the PNP was sticking to its theory that the killings were the handiwork of the Communist Party of the Philippines' special operations group (SOG) and that they were the result of the victims' decision to leave the communist mainstream several years ago.

"We have very reliable information that they were killed by the same group," Mendoza told the INQUIRER yesterday.

A driver claimed he saw two heavily armed men a few meters from where Tabara and his companion, Stephen Ong, were gunned down on Sept. 26 at the SM North parking lot.

Investigators later identified the two men as members of the liquidation unit's "blocking force."

"In the Tabara case, we still don't have any material witness who really saw the shooting," Mendoza said in a text message. "But we are optimistic that we can trace those gunmen in due time."

The police, meanwhile, are building a case of "conspiracy by collective decision" against CPP spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal and top communist leaders Leo Velasco and Prudencio Calubid.

A "policy" on the liquidation was allegedly handed down by the CPP hierarchy which later became a "directive" carried out by the SOG, Mendoza said, citing intelligence reports.

Rosal, who admitted the CPP was behind the killing, could also be considered an accomplice in the Tabara killing, he said.

Corrections

IN THE ENTERTAINMENT section of the Oct. 6 issue, a story on Page A2-1—"Rio planned 'everything'"—misstated the composer of the song, "The Warrior is a Child." The song was composed by American singer Twila Paris—not by Filipino singer Gary Valenciano.

* * *

IN THE ENTERTAINMENT section of the Oct. 7 issue, a story on Page A28—"'I love you, Ali, I love you'"—misstated the location of the Stanford Hospital. The hospital is located in Stanford, California—not Chicago, Illinois.

* * *

IN THE OPINION section of the Oct. 7 issue, a letter written by Dennis Gana on Page A14—"Napocor: Let truth be told"—misstated that Rogelio M. Murga would retire as Napocor president and chief executive officer effective Dec. 31, 2003. President Macapagal-Arroyo granted Murga's wish to retire but prevailed upon the Napocor president and CEO to stay in his post until Dec. 31, 2004.

* * *

IN THE ENTERTAINMENT section of the Oct. 8 issue, a story on Page A33—"Ogie: I've been selfish"—misstated the composer of the songs, "Nandito Ako" and "Bakit Ngayon Ka Lang?" "Nandito Ako" was composed by Aaron Paul del Rosario—not Ogie Alcasid. "Bakit Ngayon Ka Lang?" was composed by Alcasid and Del Rosario—not by Alcasid alone.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to Gerry Lirio, city editor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City; fax Nos. 897-4793/94; e-mail addresses:glirio@inquirer.com.ph and daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Raul Palabrica, readers' advocate, the same address and fax numbers as those of the city editor, and e-mail address:rpalabrica@inquirer.com.ph.

E.L. Raymundo; 68

EDGARDO L. Raymundo of Bustos, Bulacan, passed away on Saturday after a lingering illness. He was 68.

His remains lie in the family home on Amado Raymundo St. in Barangay Tanawan.

He is survived by his wife Teresita; sons Allan Leonardo, Edgardo Jr. and Pablito; daughter Ma. Fe Elvira; daughters-in-law Minette, Grace and Karen, and grandchildren Miguel, Liana, Martin, Yoquin, Polo, Magali and Gabriel.

Interment will be on Thursday at 2 p.m. at the Bustos Memorial Park.

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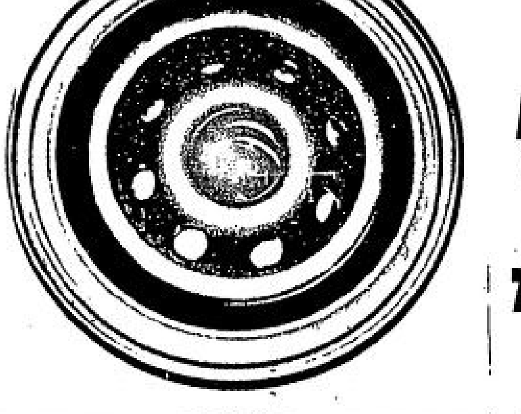

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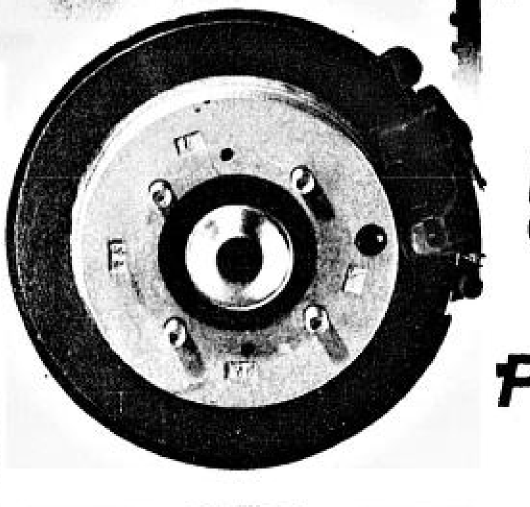

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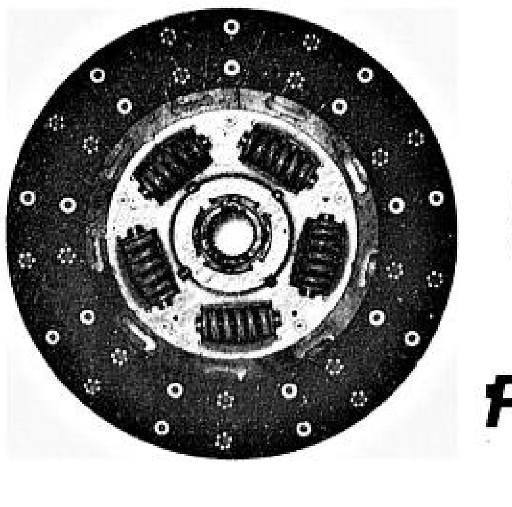

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Reds claim insurgency growing

By Norman Bordadora

LESS than a week after calling for intensified offensives against government targets and for the poor and suffering to join the underground, the Communist Party of the Philippines has announced that "thousands upon thousands" were joining revolutionary mass organizations.

"Thousands upon thousands are flocking daily to the New People's Army and revolutionary mass organizations in the cities and countryside determined to fight the Arroyo government and struggle for the overthrow of the ruling oppressive and exploitative system," CPP spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal said in a statement.

"The people are demanding that the Arroyo government be punished for its anti-people and pro-imperialist economic policies which have resulted in massive poverty and hunger," Rosal said.

The CPP also said the food coupon program of the government would not solve the problem of hunger for many Filipinos.

"The Malacañang plan to shell out food coupons does not address the root causes of poverty and will not alleviate in any way the widespread hunger among the toiling Filipino masses," Rosal said.

"Distributing sardines and instant noodles to a number of people is grossly obscene, especially when done by a government whose hands reek of corruption," he said.

Rosal said corruption was the cause of the high incidence of poverty and hunger among Filipinos. Corruption, he said, would be present when the food coupon program gets under way.

"Under such a system, the shelling out of food coupons will only be another source of graft and corruption. It would come as no surprise if these food coupons are used in their rotten politicking or if the food equivalents end up being fed to their pigs," Rosal said.

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GMA to keynote CMMA rites

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo is expected to talk about mass media's role in the promotion of family values as an instrument for social reform when she keynotes the 26th Catholic Mass Media Awards (CMMA) rites on Oct. 12 at 4 p.m. at the Henry Lee Irwin Theater, Ateneo de Manila University in Quezon City.

Vice President Noli de Castro will also attend the ceremonies, CMMA trustee and public affairs director Juan P. Dayang said.

The CMMA honors media work that promotes Christian values of love of God, truth and life, respect for the environment and positive Filipino values.

President Arroyo will receive the Jaime L. Cardinal Sin Serviam Award which is conferred on persons who believe in the freedom of the press and its power to promote Christian values and the dignity of man.

Two special service awards will be conferred on the late National Artist Nick Joaquin (posthumous) and Makati City Mayor Jejomar Binay for their achievements in literature and public service, respectively.

The CMMA was launched in 1978 by Cardinal Sin to honor media practitioners who had made outstanding contributions to the Church in various fields of mass media.

The awards are divided into print, radio, television, advertising, cinema, the Internet, music and student categories.

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Afghan poll deemed fairly democratic

KABUL—The largest observer group in Afghanistan's first ever presidential election called the polls "fairly democratic" Sunday, a day after the massive voter turnout and jubilation was tainted by opposition cries of foul and demands for a reelection.

"A fairly democratic environment has generally been observed in the overall majority of the polling centers," the local Free and Fair Elections Foundation of Afghanistan (Fefa) declared in a statement.

Their findings came in the face of protests by 14 of 18 candidates that the vote was fraudulent and illegitimate, largely because special ink which was supposed to stain voters' fingers to prevent them voting again could be washed off.

Afghanistan's first experience in democracy was hailed around the world for the strong turnout of voters and the absence of feared attacks by the former Taliban rulers, who have killed hundreds of people including 12 electoral workers this year.

"Security on the whole has been much better than pessimists had expected," Fefa said.

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) meanwhile said Sunday that demands for new polls to be held was "unjustified."

US President George W. Bush, keen to present Afghanistan as a success story in his government's antiterrorism and nation-building efforts as he heads to November polls, hailed the Afghan vote as "a really great thing."

"Just three years ago, women were being executed in the sports stadium. Today they're voting for a leader of a free country," Bush said while campaigning in Iowa.

"A 19-year-old woman, an Afghan refugee who fled her homeland during its civil war, became the very first voter," the US president said. "...amazing, isn't it? Freedom is beautiful."

Britain praised the election as "inspirational" saying the high voter turnout was a milestone after decades of conflict.

Australian Prime Minister John Howard, reelected the same day Afghans had their first taste of voting, pointed to the Afghan ballot to claim success in the antiterror fight.

"That election has been made possible by reason of the fact that a number of countries, including Australia, were prepared to take a stand for democracy and to take a stand against terrorism," Howard said in his victory speech.

The United Nations described participation as "massive."

On the ground Sunday ballot boxes were being ferried to counting centers in eight towns. Preliminary results may be available "in a couple of days," UN officials said.

The US-backed interim President Hamid Karzai, who is expected to win the election, rejected the opposition's call to scrap the polls.

"It is too late to call for a boycott now that millions of Afghans have come from their homes, despite rain and snow, and they have voted," he told a news conference.

Across the country millions of Afghans turned out, expressing joy at their first chance to have a say in their country's destiny.

"I came here to elect my president on my own. The election marks the end of warlords and wars in my country," Hayam Udin, 50, declared in Kabul, echoing the hopes of countless fellow voters.

A convoy carrying ballot papers was attacked in Uruzgan province and three policemen were killed, but elsewhere the feared violence by Taliban insurgents failed to materialize.

The biggest threat to the polls' ultimate success now is the opposition's rejection.

Karzai's main rival Yunus Qanooni, the favorite of the powerful anti-Taliban Northern Alliance, was among those alleging fraud and irregularities. *AFP*

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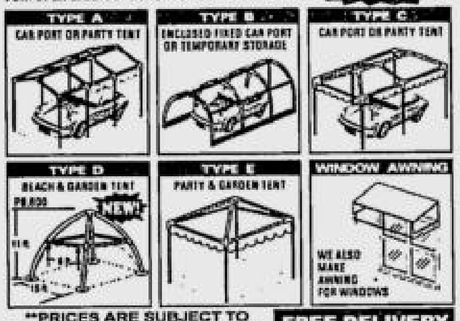
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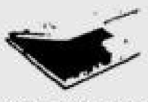
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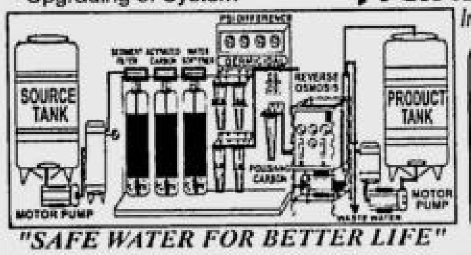
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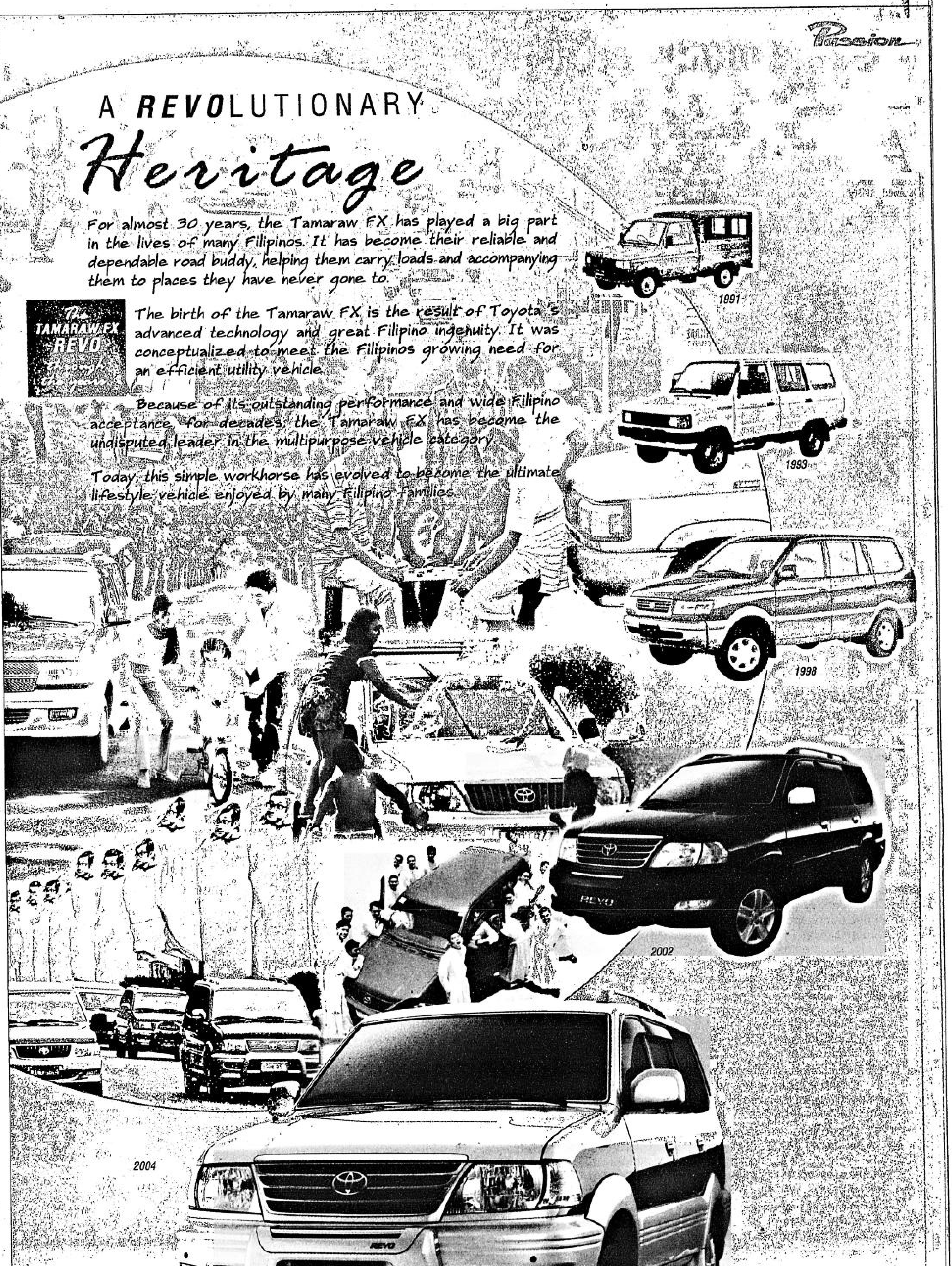

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TOYOTA

Hostage mourned as Blair remains mired in Iraq

LIVERPOOL—The British hostage beheaded in Iraq was mourned in his hometown on Saturday, his brutal killing ensuring Prime Minister Tony Blair remains mired in the Iraq war despite his efforts to focus voters on domestic issues.

Kenneth Bigley's hometown of Liverpool flew flags at half-mast to mark the death of the 62-year-old engineer, whose murder sparked revulsion across Britain.

The tragic end to Bigley's three-week ordeal has underscored Blair's vulnerability on Iraq, an issue he had hoped would take a back seat as he prepares to seek reelection.

Bigley's murder comes just seven months before an expected general election and hot on the heels of a report from the Iraq Survey Group (ISG) that demolished Blair's main argument for waging war on Iraq.

"The nightmare of Iraq is not over for Blair," said YouGov pollster Peter Kellner. "The more Iraq is in the news, the more people will be reminded why they don't trust Blair."

In the northwestern city of Liverpool, politics were put aside as residents stood still at midday for a two-minute silence in memory of Bigley.

"I can't put into words the sorrow we feel," said Rose Watts, 65, after observing the silence. "I feel like I have lost somebody I know, a brother."

The horror of the beheading was compounded by reports from insurgent sources in Iraq that Bigley had escaped briefly from his captors shortly before they killed him on Thursday.

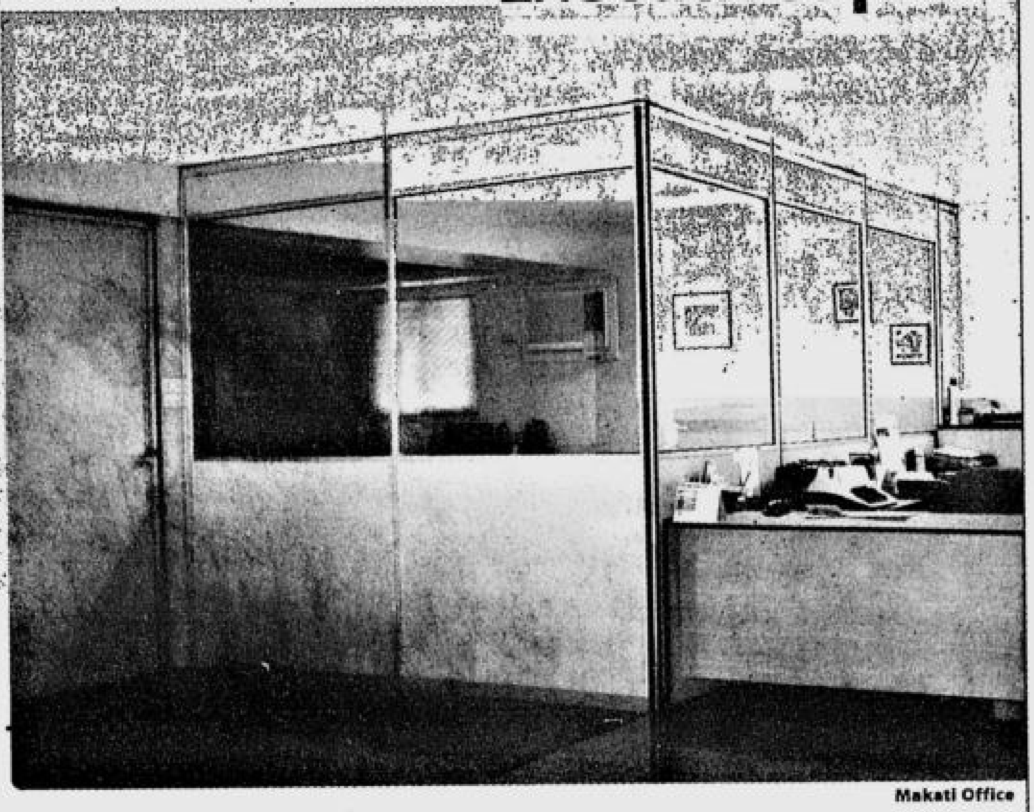
Political opponents have declared a temporary truce out of respect for Bigley's grieving family. But Blair's judgment in backing the US-led war had toppled Saddam Hussein will be back under the microscope when parliament returns next week.

Blair biographer Anthony Seldon told Reuters: "Iraq will be the defining issue of his premiership. The greatest error of his premiership was to back America to the hilt without insisting on conditions.

"It is not getting any better and Iraq is arguably getting worse. It will bring up questions about trust and judgment but also about Blair's future position.

"If his trust and judgment continue to be questioned by events in Iraq, his Labour Party will ask if he is the right champion to be its leader."

Blair, who last week had an operation to correct heart palpitations, has vowed to serve a full third term if elected—but then he will step down. *Reuters*



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JOINT MANIFESTO

The members of the Philippine Association for Government Budget Administration, Inc. (PAGBA) and the Association of Government Accountants of the Philippines, Inc. (AGAP), who are also members of the GSIS, felt aggrieved, humiliated and betrayed by the actions of the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) through its Board of Trustees and President and General Manager Winston F. Garcia when:

1. GSIS unilaterally suspended the processing of employees' claim from April to September 2003 simply because of the installation of a new computerized system. The effectivity of such suspension came shortly after GSIS invested P 8.0 Billion in a newly incorporated subsidiary – the GSIS Property, Inc.
2. GSIS continuously refused to disclose officially what ratable portion of the member's and employer's premium contribution (9 and 12% respectively, of basic salary) would form part of the Retirement Fund and Life Insurance Fund.
3. GSIS adopted and implemented the premium based policy on September 17, 2003 despite the absence of a comprehensive actuarial and legal studies, and knowing fully well that "a lot of government employees would be adversely affected".
4. GSIS shifted the burden of producing the records of premium/amortization payments, collections and remittances to individual members and their employers when in fact GSIS personnel and officials have the mandated duty to safekeep and maintain such records.
5. GSIS deducted such unpaid premium contributions and amortizations from the proceeds of salary/policy loans or retirement benefits due an individual member.
6. GSIS issued erroneous Statement of Premium and Loans Repayment Index generated by its multi-million pesos newly installed computer system thereby making it appear that individual members have various unpaid premiums and loan payments although these were already remitted by the agencies to GSIS.
7. GSIS failed to comply with the promise to issue corrected Statement of Premium and Loans Repayment Index by end of September 30, 2004, that is one year from the effectivity date of the scourge – the premium based policy.

The members of PAGBA and AGAP are disgusted, exasperated and becoming impatient to the deliberate delay, if not outright refusal, of GSIS in furnishing them documents and/or information which are reasonably necessary in formulating proposed amendments to Republic Act 8291 such as:

1. Actuarial studies on the social insurance reserve funds from 1998 to 2003;
2. List of investments in traded stocks from 1997 to 2003;
3. List of business loans from 1997 to 2003;
4. Dividend allocation formula from 1997 to 2003;
5. Actual study supporting the premium based policy of GSIS; and
6. Allocation of employee's and employer's contribution to Retirement and Life Insurance Fund.

The members of PAGBA and AGAP are deeply concerned on the use of "creative accounting" practices by GSIS such that:

1. The employees' and employers' contributions are reported as income rather than as trust fund;
2. The actuarial reserve deficit is not reflected nor disclosed in the financial statements;
3. The expense account in 2001 includes "bad debts on investments" amounting to P 3.672 Billion;
4. For the purpose of compliance to the 12 percent expense loading, revenues are recognized from all sources (including employees' and employers' contributions) while expenses are limited only to administrative expenses thereby excluding operating expenses.
5. The presentation of the financial statements are modified almost from year to year.

The members of PAGBA and AGAP are very disappointed by the manner GSIS is trying to mislead its members and the public by way of trumpeting the quantum leaps in the revenues and net operating income of the System resulting from the "judicious management" of its funds. The truth was that the quantum leap in revenues is attributed primarily to the continuous increase in the rates and amount of contributions of its members and employers since 1997 up to 2002.

Finally, the members of PAGBA and AGAP are very much wary of the propensity of the Board of Trustees and the President and General Manager of the GSIS to promulgate policies and/or rules which impair and dilute the basic rights and benefits of GSIS members.

GSIS has caused so much anxiety and sufferings to its members. GSIS is now perceived as a burden to its members.

For these reasons, the members of PAGBA and AGAP respectfully call upon the leaders of this nation – Her Excellency President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, Honorable Franklin M. Drilon of the Senate of the Philippines and Honorable Jose C. de Venecia of the House of Representative to immediately conduct an independent formal inquiry on the state of affairs of the Government Service Insurance System so as to maintain peace and sobriety among the 1.5 Million GSIS members.

BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE BOARDS OF DIRECTORS OF PAGBA AND AGAP:

CYRIL E. RAMOS
President

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

Taiwan calls for peace talks, 'code of conduct' with China

TAIPEI—Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian used his Sunday National Day speech to call for peace talks with arch foe China and urge both sides to adopt a system to prevent an outbreak of conflict in the narrow strait dividing them.

The Taiwan Strait has become one of Asia's most dangerous flash points since Chen's reelection in March. China is convinced Chen will push the island it sees as a rebel province toward formal statehood in his second four-year term—a move that Beijing has said would lead to war.

In a conciliatory move, Chen said his government was willing to return to the negotiating table based on a 1992 understanding over interpretation of Beijing's cherished "one China" principle.

"In the long-term, both sides should formally end the state of hostility across the Taiwan Strait and establish confidence-building measures through consultations and dialogues," Chen said in his speech in front of the Presidential Office in Taipei.

Chen had long said the speech would contain a peace overture, and he took the opportunity to propose the resumption of talks with Beijing that have been frozen since 1999, by saying he was ready to return to dialogue on the principles first agreed.

"I would like to take the initiative to propose that both sides use the basis of the 1992 meeting in Hong Kong, to seek possible schemes that are 'not necessarily perfect but acceptable,' as preparation of a step forward in the resumption of dialogue and consultation," Chen said.

A consensus in 1992 in which each side agreed to hold its own interpretation of the "one China" principle paved the way for historic negotiations in Singapore between Taipei and Beijing.

Since a 1949 civil war split, China has regarded the self-ruled, democratic island as a province that must be returned to the fold—by force if necessary.

Chen's government had previously said both sides "agreed to disagree" in 1992 and avoid any reference of the "one China" principle.

However, talks broke down in 1999 when then president Lee Teng-hui redefined ties as between "special state to state," angering China by raising the prospect of an independent Taiwan.

Chen appeared to opt for a conciliatory tone.

"The Republic of China and the People's Republic of China—or Taiwan and China—can seek to establish political relations in any form whatsoever," he said.

"We would not exclude any possibility, so long as there is the consent of the 23 million people of Taiwan," Chen said in his closely watched speech.

Chen said both sides should seriously,consider arms control and take concrete actions to reduce tension.

"We should review the armament policies of both sides and seek to establish a 'Code of Conduct across the Taiwan Strait' as the tangible guarantee of permanent peace in the Taiwan Strait." The Oct. 10 "Double-Tenth" national day marks the founding of the Republic of China after the Qing dynasty fell in 1911.

The government of the republic, the Nationalist Party, fled to Taiwan after losing a civil war to the communists in 1949.

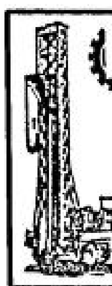
Chen swept to power in 2000, ending more than half a century of one-party Nationalist rule on the island. *Reuters*

Israeli Army kills 7 in Gaza

GAZA—Israeli troops killed seven Palestinians, including five militants, in Gaza on Saturday as the army pressed on with a massive offensive aimed at stopping militants firing rockets into Israel.

At least 87 Palestinians, 50 of them militants and the rest civilians, have been killed in the offensive with some 200 tanks and armored vehicles—the biggest thrust into Gaza since the Palestinian uprising began in 2000.

Three Israelis have also died since the start of the raid. *Reuters*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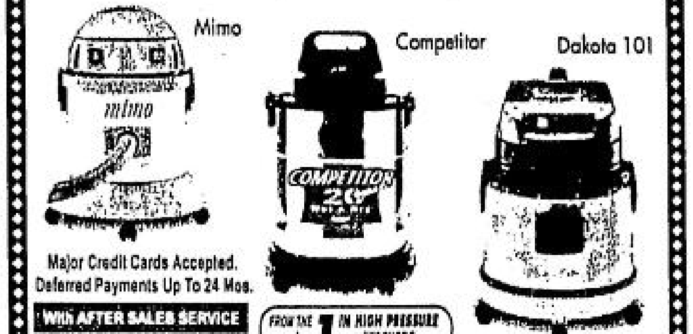

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Kerry back in Florida as knife-edge poll looms

DAVIE, Florida—Four years after Florida emerged as villain of the 2000 US election debacle, the Sunshine state is again in the cross hairs of a too close-to-call race for the White House.

Amid warnings of new voting irregularities this time around, Democratic hopeful John Kerry flew back Saturday to the land of the pregnant chad to meet supporters in a town-hall meeting in Broward County, 24 hours after his televised dust-up with President George W. Bush in St. Louis.

"We need a president who understands that working with other countries is a sign of strength, not weakness," Kerry said, lashing Bush again on Iraq, before moving on to critique the president on issues crucial to local voters like healthcare and the economy.

Broward was one of the Florida districts which became notorious in the deadlocked 2000 election between Al Gore and Bush.

It was here that painstaking hand counts stained the election but enriched the English language with new terminology such as pregnant, dimpled and hanging chads—imperfect indentations made on ballot punch cards by voting machines.

Bush eventually prevailed in Florida by only 537 votes, which gave him enough electoral college votes to take the White House after the Supreme Court ended a five-week legal battle over recounts in Florida.

Kerry, running neck and neck with Bush in Florida and nationwide ahead of the Nov. 2 presidential election, was back in the state just a week after their first debate, near Miami.

Before this trip, he had spent 20 days in Florida this year. Bush has also blitzed the state, using his role as president to dispense federal aid to communities staggering after a string of deadly storms.

Florida could hold the key to the White House, with its lucrative 27 electoral votes—a tenth of the total needed to win in November. Only California, New York and Texas have more, and none of the three are considered up for grabs.

Texas is considered a safe bet for the Republicans, while New York and California generally yield majorities for the Democrats.

Many analysts say the race could be tight again this year, as most polls have Bush and Kerry neck and neck within the margin of statistical error.

"It's a close race in Florida, we believe that we have done well there and have a small lead in the state," Kerry strategist Joe Lockhart said last week.

"There is no more important place for us in the country and we feel very comfortable that we are going to win the state."

Testing the political waters has been hampered by the hurricanes which barreled through Florida in August and September, slicing electricity and telephone lines.

There have also been dire warnings that in the event of another knife-edge election, history could repeat itself.

Former president Jimmy Carter, who has monitored scores of elections worldwide, warned in the Washington Post last month that reforms passed after the 2000 election snafu have not been implemented.

"The disturbing fact is that a repetition of the problems of 2000 now seems likely," he said.

"Some basic international requirements for a fair election are missing in Florida," including non-partisan electoral officials and uniformity in voting procedures, he said.

With memories of 2000 fresh, both Democrats and Republicans have tooled up with teams of lawyers in Florida and other battleground states to pounce immediately should irregularities occur. AFP

KERRY shakes hands with supporters at Lorain County Community College in Elyria, Ohio, Oct. 9.

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A wire under Bush's coat? Papers ponder bulge puzzle

WASHINGTON—A mysterious bulge under US President George W. Bush's suit jacket during his first debate with Democratic rival John Kerry drew the attention of two top US newspapers on Saturday after days of feverish Internet speculation.

The Bush campaign has dismissed the "mystery bulge" as nothing more than a wrinkle in the presidential jacket and derided speculation that Bush may have been wired as nothing more than the "ridiculous" speculation of Internet conspiracy nuts.

"Credible news organizations have taken a serious look at that and decided not to run the story," said Bush campaign spokesperson Scott Stanzel. "People have been spending too much time dealing with Internet conspiracies. It's ridiculous."

Still, the bulge drew the attention on Saturday of respected mainstream dailies The New York Times and The Washington Post.

"The Mystery of the Bulge in the Jacket," was the headline on the brief Times item which accompanied its extensive coverage of Friday's second presidential debate in St. Louis, Missouri.

The Post ran a much longer story under the headline: "Bulge Under President's Coat in First Debate Stirs Speculation."

Political Web logs, or blogs, have been buzzing about the bulge since the first presidential debate in Miami on Sept. 30. The rectangular protrusion in the middle of Bush's back is visible in news photos and television footage.

A number of anti-Bush bloggers have speculated that the president was wearing a hidden earpiece and that the bulge was a radio receiver linked to a political aide prompting him from offstage.

Asked by AFP about the bulge, a White House spokesperson simply rolled her eyes.

A Bush campaign spokesperson said it was nothing more than a question of tailoring.

"There was nothing under his suit jacket," Nicolle Devenish, the Bush campaign's communications director, told the Times. "It was most likely a rumpling of that portion of his suit jacket, or a wrinkle in the fabric." *AFP*

Unusually high turnout seen in US Nov. 2 presidential vote

WASHINGTON—Voter registration drives are gaining exceptional momentum in the run-up to the US presidential elections, pointing to an unusually high turnout on Nov. 2.

The National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS), organization of the state officials responsible for keeping voter registration lists, reports "record-breaking numbers" in all regions of the country.

In Florida, where a bitter recount in 2000 delayed the official results by 36 days before giving George W. Bush a razor-thin win over Al Gore, there has been a surge in registrations. As of Aug. 2, they stood at 9.7 million; one million more than in 2000, according to the secretary of state's office.

This year, Florida is one of the states in hottest contention, with Bush and Democrat John Kerry virtually neck and neck.

In New Mexico, which narrowly went Democratic in 2000, 10 percent of the electorate will be new voters this year, said NASS spokesperson Meredith Imwalle.

In Missouri and Minnesota, two key battleground states, "organizations are requesting boxes of voting registration cards by the thousands," she said.

"There's been a surge. We have seen record-breaking numbers; 2000 showed that every vote counts."

The registration surge was at least in part legislated by Congress, which in 2002 passed the Help America Vote Act, said Imwalle. The law, she explained, was "designed to clean up the process. It gave money to the states for voter education and voter outreach campaigns."

But there is also a broad mix of parapolitical groups getting out the vote, from the flirty "Virgin Voters" skipping across college campuses to followers of unabashedly anti-Bush film maker Michael Moore offering registrants rewards of "clean shorts and freeze-dried soup."

The race is so tight that the two camps can only hope the surge in registrations will go their way.

"I am confident we're going to win," said Don Eggert, an aggressive Democratic campaign worker in Wisconsin, where Bush holds a 10-point margin over Kerry in the polls.

Donald Green, political science professor at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut, said the Democrats have drummed up more registrations than the Republicans. But he wonders whether that will produce results on Nov. 2.

"Democratic organizations have registered a larger number, but we don't know if they'll vote," he said. *AFP*

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Reelected Australia premier to focus on Asia

SYDNEY—Australia's newly reelected Prime Minister John Howard may be unquestioning in his support for the United States, but one of his key priorities during a fourth straight term will be to shore up often uneasy ties with Asia.

Howard was quickly congratulated by close allies US President George W. Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair after voters reelected his conservative government on Saturday but there is another leader Howard is keen to speak to.

"One person I will want to speak to ... very soon is the President-elect of Indonesia, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, who will be a very important figure in our region," Howard told reporters at his final news conference on Friday before the election.

With Australia and Australians named as a target by Islamic militant network al-Qaida and its Southeast Asian arm Jemaah Islamiah, Howard knows the importance of support for the war on terror from the leader of the world's largest Muslim nation.

At times Howard has tested Australia's relationship with Asia, alarming its nearest neighbors with recent policy announcements that reinforced his 1999 description of Australia as a US "deputy sheriff" in Asia.

Australia adopted an interventionist policy in the South Pacific following the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the United States, fearing instability in its small island neighbors could create havens for drug traffickers, smugglers and terror groups.

Australia already has troops and police in the Solomon Islands and police in Fiji, Tonga and Samoa. It plans to deploy a force of police and civil servants in the coming months to Papua New Guinea to restore law and order to that troubled South Pacific nation.

Howard caused further alarm when he recently reiterated his view that preemptive strikes in another country were a legitimate response to terrorist threats, and announced plans for a regional spy school and for counterterrorism teams in Asia.

Australia has unveiled plans to create Southeast Asia's "most lethal" force of fighter jets with long-range cruise missiles.

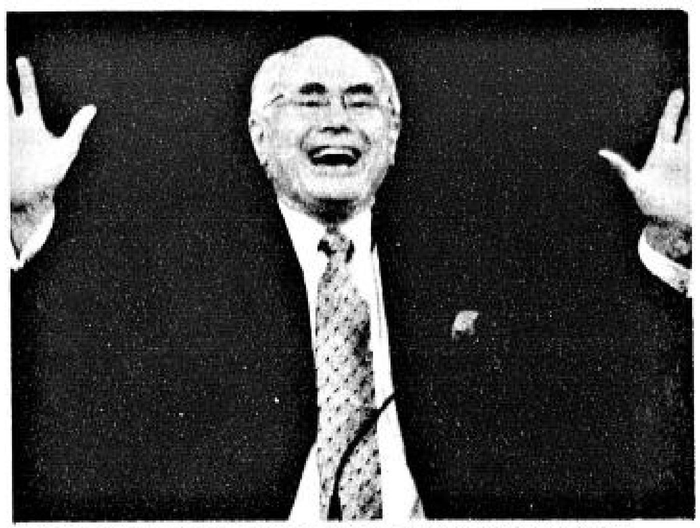
But Howard does not believe he will have to explain his policies, particularly on preemptive strikes, to Yudhoyono, who he hopes to meet on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in Chile in November.

"He will understand exactly what I'm talking about and he will know that it is non-threatening to Indonesia," Howard said.

"The circumstances in which it might happen are circumstances where another country would be either unwilling or unable (to act) and I have no doubt the spirit of cooperation between Australia and Indonesia would never see that occur," he said.

Howard's beaten rival, Labor leader Mark Latham, derided the government during a six-week election campaign for its "hairy-chested" policy of preemption and argued involvement in US-led Iraq has made Australia less safe.

Latham, who wanted to bring Australia's 850 troops in and around Iraq home, believed Australia was less safe because resources had been diverted to the other side of the world when the focus should have been on waging the war on terror in Asia. *Reuters*



A JUBILANT Howard addresses his party faithful after claiming victory in the federal election in Sydney, Oct. 9. Howard won a historic fourth term in a vote that will ensure the staunch US ally will keep its troops in Iraq for the foreseeable future. AP

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Open house

EDITORIAL

WHAT game is it playing? In the last week of September, the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. hosted an open house of sorts at the controversial Terminal 3 of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

On Sept. 27 and 28, ambassadors and other members of the diplomatic corps were taken on a tour of the hundred-million-dollar facility, which is at the center of litigation in the Philippines and abroad. On Sept. 29, it was the turn of airline and travel agency representatives. And on Sept. 30, Piatco rolled out the red carpet for Senators Edgardo Angara, Juan Ponce Enrile and Alfredo Lim.

The following week, however, the company turned back a high-level delegation from the Arroyo administration, which included the executive secretary, Eduardo Ermita; the transportation secretary, Leandro Mendoza; and the President's own spokesperson, press secretary Ignacio Bunye. The officials, in other words, were denied entry.

An angry Bunye waxed speculative. "They must be hiding something that they don't want us to see."

But Liwayway Vinzons-Chato, who represents Piatco president Cheng Yong, was quick to reply. "Naia Terminal 3 is a state-of-the-art, fully functional and modern international airport terminal." She then added: "What Piatco is opposed to is an inspection by biased non-experts or government lawyers with no avowed purpose other than fault-finding in aid of the government's defense before the ICC and ICSID arbitration panels."

The former Bureau of International Revenue commissioner was referring to the arbitration case Piatco filed with the International Chamber of Commerce and a similar case that Fraport, its German partner, filed with the International Center for Settlement of Investment Disputes. These cases were filed after the Supreme Court last year voided Piatco's contract to build and operate Naia 3.

Parse Chato's statement, however, and more questions are raised than answered. One issue at stake in the arbitration cases is the status of project completion: Is the new terminal fully operational? Government representatives have previously said that more millions of dollars are needed to complete the terminal. But completion is a question of fact. In Piatco's view, the terminal is already fully operational. The company hosted the diplomats, the airline and travel agency representatives, and the senators the other week precisely to press this case.

Why deny some of the highest officials in the administration the same opportunity?

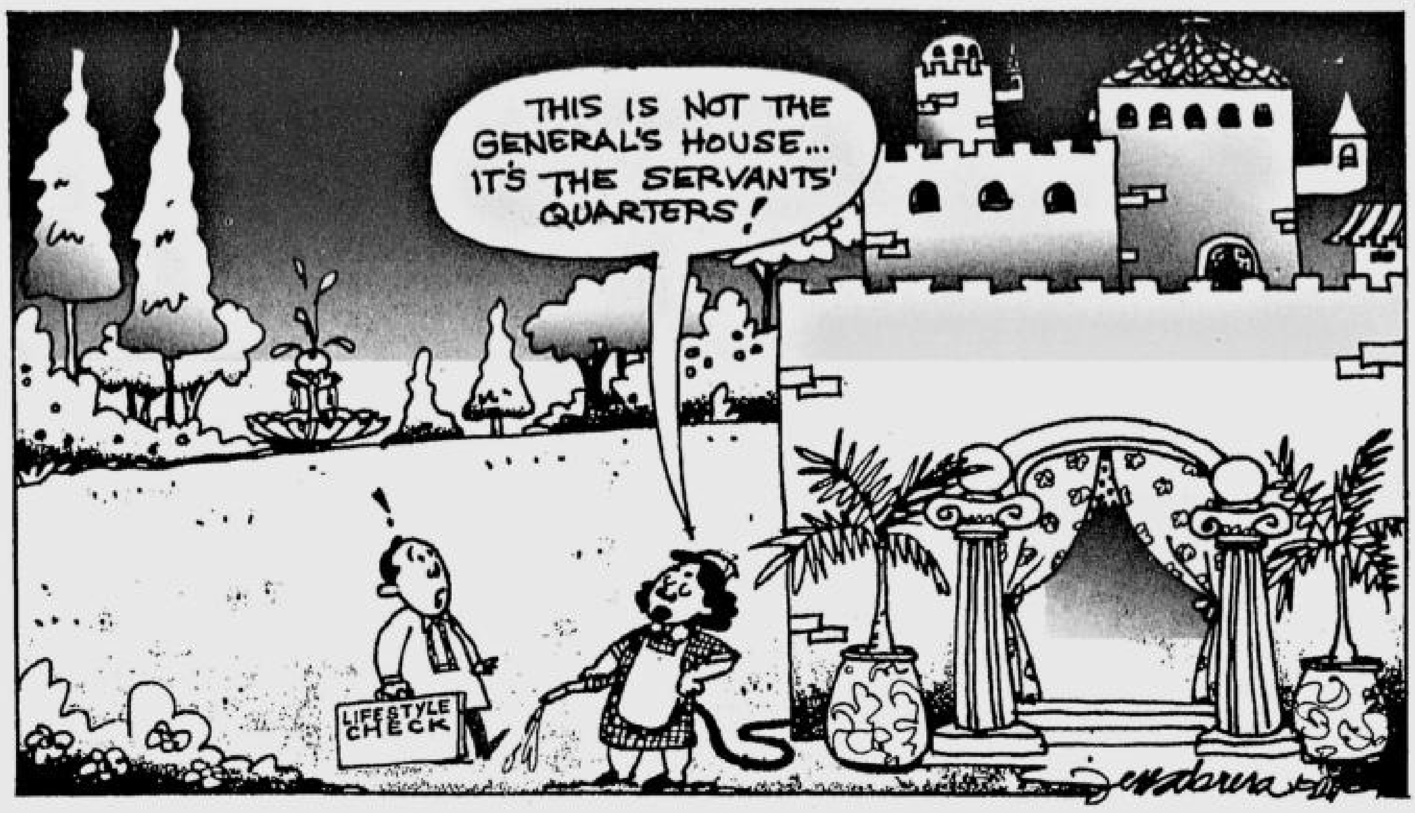
Another issue at stake is the proposed government buyout of Piatco; the administration had offered to pay the contractor $350 million. But both Piatco and Fraport, (which on paper owns 30 percent of the contractor), found the amount ridiculously low. At the ICSID, Fraport's brief is for the Philippine government to reimburse what it says is a $425 million investment.

An inspection of the facilities, even by "biased non-experts," would have been a great opportunity to impress upon the administration exactly where all that money went, to make it appreciate the company's valuation of the project's costs. Why did Piatco refuse to present itself—and the terminal—in the best possible light?

The terminal is not only the subject of contention in the ongoing cases; it is also the principal evidence. The notion that one party to the cases cannot have even temporary access to the evidence is contrary to the requirements of both reason and the law. Will the government be forced to make its defense without the opportunity to inspect the terminal thoroughly?

But the most telling question Chato's statement raises—but does not answer—is even more fundamental. Does Piatco think that it is beyond the reach of the law? The national government has oversight responsibility for all airports in the country. On the most basic level, the general manager of the Manila International Airport Authority has the power to inspect the terminal. But even though he was one of the officials who came visiting last week, the Malacañang delegation was still denied entry.

This is not only poor form, an outrage in a culture famous for its open arms. It is also a challenge to the long arm of the law.


THIS IS NOT THE GENERAL'S HOUSE... IT'S THE SERVANTS' QUARTERS!
LIFESTYLE CHECK
Jess Abrera

Ad valorem better than specific tax on cigarettes

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE LEAST opposed tax measure is the proposed increase in the "sin" taxes (on cigarettes, liquor and the like). But the legislators can't agree on how to go about it. One group of congressmen wants to stick to the fixed specific tax; another wants the ad valorem tax, and a third, a combination of both.

For the past 20 years, Congress has been changing the tax system on "sin" products. From 1984 to 1986, it was specific tax plus ad valorem; from 1986 to 1996, it was ad valorem; and from 1996 to the present, it has been specific tax.

Why do members of Congress keep changing tax systems? Perhaps because whenever a new tax scheme is proposed in Congress, lobbyists with conflicting interests on the tax in question are very active in Congress, and you know what that means. And there are no more generous lobbyists than those representing the manufacturers of cigarettes and liquor.

What are these taxes? The specific tax is a fixed tax on every pack of cigarettes, regardless of retail cost. The proposed increase is a uniform P1 for the pack retailing at P13.44 and for the pack selling at 40 centavos. Thus, the high-priced cigarettes will be sold from the old P13.44 a pack to the new P14.44 per pack, an increase of 7 percent. The low-priced cigarette, on the other hand, will be sold from the original 40 centavos to P1.40 a pack, an increase of 250 percent.

If the increase is P2 per pack, the premium brand will sell at P15.44, an increase of only 15 percent. But the low-priced brand will sell at P2.40 a pack, or a whopping 500 percent increase. There are several tiers of prices for cigarettes, set in consideration of the smokers' different class levels and tastes. From 40 centavos a pack, the prices go up gradually to P1.12, P5.60, P8.96, to P13.44. But the percentage of increases go down proportionately from 250 percent, to 89 percent, to 18 percent, to 11 percent and to only 7 percent for the premium brand, respectively. If the increase is doubled to P2 per pack, the percentages are also doubled, from a high of 500 percent for the low-priced brand to a low of only 15 percent for the premium brand.

As you can see, an across-the-board increase, which is the specific tax, imposes disproportionate burdens on the different brands and their smokers.

The ad valorem tax, on the other hand, is a fixed percentage added to the price per pack. The higher the price, the bigger the tax, although the percentage remains the same for both the premium and the low-priced brands.

Not surprisingly, the competing manufacturers favor the tax most favorable to them. Philip Morris and La Suerte, which manufacture the premium foreign brands, favor the specific tax, while Fortune Tobacco, which manufactures the lower-priced local brands, favors the ad valorem.

Philip Morris and La Suerte say that under the ad valorem tax manufacturers can deflate their selling price to retailers so that they would pay less taxes. In the new ad valorem tax, however, the tax would be based on the retail prices per pack of each brand in selected outlets.

Fortune, on the other hand, says that the specific tax system results in the unequal sharing of the tax burden among the various brands of cigarettes. To illustrate, compare the tax imposed on two brands, Philip Morris and Hope, Fortune's highest-priced brand. The retail price of a pack of Philip Morris in 2003 was P22.31; it was taxed at P8.96 a pack. On the other hand, Hope cost only P17.81 and was taxed at the same rate—P8.96 a pack. The tax burden of Philip Morris, therefore, was only 40 percent while Hope was 50 percent.

Increasing the tax rate by P1 a pack will increase the tax burden of Hope to 56 percent while that of Philip Morris will rise to only 45 percent.

But if the tax burden is equalized by the ad valorem tax to 50 percent of the actual retail price, the tax on Philip Morris would be P11.22. The combined taxes of Hope and Philip Morris would be P20.18 or P2.26 (12.63 percent) more than their combined taxes under a specific tax scheme. For these two brands alone, had they been taxed in 2003 in proportion to their retail prices, the government could have collected P609 million more.

For the top 11 brands, (all are taxed under Republic Act 8240 at P8.96 per pack), the tax lost in 2003—had they been taxed in proportion to their retail prices—amounted to P1.74 billion!

Besides, Fortune says, that the ad valorem system is consistent with Sec. 28, paragraph 1 of Article VI of the Constitution, to wit: "The rule of taxation shall be uniform and equitable. The Congress shall evolve a progressive system of taxation."

Fortune maintains that the ad valorem system is a progressive tax measure where all products pay proportionately according to their actual retail prices.

For example, applying the 1996 ad valorem tax rates to the 2003 retail prices and volume sold by the 11 major brands, tax collection should have been P14.594 billion, or P2.670 billion more than what was actually collected. Including other brands, the industry's tax payments would have totaled P25.087 billion, or P5.615 billion more than the tax actually collected.

By the way, in 2003, Fortune Tobacco paid the biggest share in the industry total, more than P11 billion in taxes, or more than 56 percent of the total revenues collected by the government from the whole tobacco industry. The second biggest was paid by Philip Morris, more than P7.6 billion, or 38.8 percent of the total, while La Suerte paid only P630.1 million, or 3.20 percent.

The total tax collection in 2003 was P69.31 billion. Almost one-third or 28.42 percent of that came from the tobacco industry.

Still, hunger

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I CAUGHT Patricia Sto. Tomas on TV defending it. Frankly, she said, she couldn't understand why anyone would protest the food coupons. Sure it was a desperate move, but the situation was desperate. People were hungry. At least government was doing something. Would we rather President Macapagal-Arroyo just wrung her hands and fell on her knees in supplication? The food coupons were not meant to be the ultimate solution, just a temporary one.

Ignacio Bunye said the same thing. "In any crisis," he said, "the government must serve first and foremost those who are on the edge of survival. Relief, however temporary, is called for as we lead on in the more fundamental and larger reforms that would deal with poverty permanently."

Well, we have a saying, *"Aanhin pa ang damo kung patay na ang kabayo?"* which translates literally in English as, "What will you do with the hay when the horse is dead?" It asserts the wisdom of having a sense of priorities. Saving hay means nothing when the horse is kept hungry: the plenitude of hay won't matter to it when it's dead. First, feed the horse, then save as much hay as remains afterward.

It's not a bad adage, but it is one that does not apply here. This is not a case of feeding the horse first and saving hay afterward. This is a case of giving the horse a bit of hay—and a few drops of water—after deliberately starving it for months. The exact parallel here is bringing toys to the war-ravaged kids of Muslim Mindanao. By itself there is nothing wrong with that, it is even salutary. It offers diversion, if not comfort, to kids in refugee centers, many of whom have lost their mothers and fathers to the war. But it is nothing less than obscene when it comes after causing those same kids to lose their mothers and fathers to a gratuitous war. It is not thoughtfulness, it is rubbing salt on wound.

That is what the food coupons are. By itself, it is not a bad idea. But it is nothing less than obscene when it comes after causing people to go hungry in the first place. That is what its critics are protesting. Have government officials become so inured to iniquity they cannot see the monumental irony of those food coupons? Isn't it one for Guinness that the one leader who brought hunger to this country, and sparked the specter of food riots in the future, is a trade specialist? Isn't it one for Ripley's that the one President who drove this country on the verge of economic collapse, issuing food coupons for the first time since the War, is an economist?

It is not merely—as critics of the food coupons say—that it violates the other adage that says, "It is better to teach a man to fish than to give him fish." It is simply that it gives a man fish after taking his boat and his fishing line away from him and putting up a "No Trespassing" sign in front of the sea. GMA borrowed in three and a half years more than Fidel Ramos and Erap did in their combined eight years of rule. To have nothing to show for this other than a country now on the verge of a humanitarian disaster—as Bishop Deogracias Iñiguez of the CBCP puts it—not unlike the African countries we used to pity and give mission alms to, represents pillage of a scale that rivals only the Marcos regime's. It is giving people fish after robbing them of the means to catch fish.

In any crisis, says Bunye, government must serve first and foremost those on the edge of survival. Those words are not without sublime irony, having taken on the most perverse meanings over the last several months. Government was made to serve someone on the edge of survival some months ago. That was GMA, the post-Edsa II President who was desperate to win a second term after plunging the country to a desperate pass last year. No money was spared to allow her to do so. You add up the entire amount the food subsidies will cost the nation, and it is nothing compared to the sum GMA spent to win the 2004 elections.

Unfortunately for the hungry, they cannot eat her billboards. They cannot even use them to fortify their shacks: Even the hungry have aesthetics.

As the crisis bites, we are going to hear government officials tell us more and more to forget our differences and recriminations and unite behind GMA to pull the country out of the rut. We are going to hear government officials tell us more and more to stop complaining and dwelling on the negative side of things and start working together and thinking positively to get this country over the hump. Nothing can be more stupid. The reason we are in this rut, or keep falling deeper into it, is that we do not recriminate and complain enough, we do not dwell on the "negative" enough.

If we had protested loudly against GMA's ransacking of the public treasury to win a second term, we might even now have enough money for wholesale relief. No, we might not even have a situation needing massive relief to begin with. If we had protested loudly against her "war against terror," we would not have had a fellow Filipino threatened with beheading by Iraqi partisans. No, we might not even have had a situation where overseas Filipino workers need to be prevented from going to Iraq.

Angelo de la Cruz survives and we toast GMA for deciding to pull our troops back, forgetting she put them there to begin with. GMA issues food coupons and we—or her supporters, which include ex-activists and ex-pillars of civil society—toast her for feeding the hungry, forgetting she made them hungry in the first place.

The point in any crisis is not just to unite, it is to know how to lead. Otherwise we'll just go around in circles. Is it a wonder we keep having the sensation the world is spinning?

That's not just the product of hunger.

Bright spot

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

IN THE SECOND TV debate between US presidential candidates George W. Bush and John Kerry, I got the impression that a more aggressive Bush was able to shave off Kerry's lead in the first debate. Subsequent US media polls bore me out—they're now in a statistical dead heat. But doubtless many Filipinos also got the feeling that the United States is lucky in that whoever wins, that country would be okay, since both candidates are qualified. In our case last May 2004 elections, the thinking class really had no choice but to back up Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

* * *

My son, Buddy, a Bush fan, opines that the statistical dead heat only means that Bush isn't doing bad at all. He argues that given all the problems the United States faces, especially the war in Iraq, it's always easy for a challenger to hit an incumbent's record. But Kerry has only managed to even up with Bush, not to pull away. He said this is so unlike during the Vietnam war 40 years ago, when President Lyndon Johnson decided not to run for reelection, knowing he wouldn't win at all.

* * *

In the current race for the presidency of the University of the Philippines, there's a preponderance of lady candidates, and expectedly, the most visible and written about is the feisty former chief of the National Economic and Development Authority, TV host and INQUIRER columnist Winnie Monsod. I personally know two other female candidates: current UP Diliman chancellor Emerlinda Roman, who boasts of a well-rounded experience in the university's administration; and Dr. Georgina Reyes Encanto, whose main accomplishments during her term as dean of the Institute of Mass Communications was its elevation into a college in 1988, the establishment of the College of MassCom Foundation and the revival of the DZUP. Tireless at MassCom's helm, she organized and implemented the Lopez Jaena Community Workshop for community journalists with the support of the National Press Club and UP for 12 years. Georgina is said to be a "dark horse" in the UP race inasmuch as her father, the late Virgilio Reyes, was former press secretary of President Diosdado Macapagal; though I'm sure she'd rather be evaluated on her own merits.

* * *

Among the four male candidates, I cannot be begrudged for being partial to the Philippine ambassador to the United Kingdom, Edgardo Espiritu. I have known him for a long time, having served with him in various causes—in the Alay sa Kawal Foundation, which he has chaired for 18 years, and Erda Foundation, among others. This genial, amiable guy has the knack for getting people of various temperaments to do things together, which is what UP needs. His international connections could help immensely in getting the funds for the urgent rehabilitation of UP, which has slipped considerably in recent rankings among the best Asian universities. The grapevine say he's GMA's choice, but Ed's drawback is that he's 69, just a year away from the mandatory retirement age.

As with the US presidential candidates, the current crop of contenders for the top UP post leaves us comfortable in the thought that whoever is chosen by the UP Board of Regents next month will be "okay." May the best candidate win.

* * *

Last Saturday, I wrote about the criminal case filed by Antero Sison against three top executives of Edsa Plaza Shangri-la Hotel. He alleged that despite his complaint that a thief forced open his locker in the hotel's health club and stole his wallet and credit cards, the hotel failed to inform him about the arrest of someone found in possession of fake keys to lockers there and of his stolen wallet. Because no complaint was lodged against the suspect, he was able to go free. I called up hotel GM Wolfgang Krueger, against whom Sison is filing a deportation case, to get his side, but he refused to make any statement, except "I have nothing to say." Strange PR this guy practices.

* * *

Our colleague Fe Zamora recently featured the new sunrise industry that's among the brightest spots in our horizon, the "call center" business. By chance, Cecile Alvarez and I invited to our 9:15 p.m. Sunday dzRH show Jeanette S. Carillo, brand manager of Information Technology Services and officer in charge of the ICT Division of the Board of Investments; and Gina Arquiza, its investments specialist, to talk about this exciting field and its prospects for employing highly skilled Filipinos.

Readers who watched the second US presidential debates will recall that John Kerry has made it a campaign promise to "protect" US jobs. This has come about due to the fact that customer servicing in various fields have been "outsourced" in recent years from places like India, China and right here in RP. The thinking, however, is that US companies have little choice but to outsource these customer services, as the cost of labor in the United States has become prohibitive (cost in RP is only one-fifth of US cost).

* * *

Carillo revealed that the call center business began here four years ago with only one or two players who recruited workers only from the "exclusive schools" in Metro Manila. Today there are 66 players, mostly foreign-owned, catering to the biggest global clients. They are located mostly here in the metropolis, but at least four are in Cebu. A number are in Central Luzon. Two are to rise in Dumaguete and Davao City. One of the biggest call center outfits in the United States, Convergys, is now in Manila and has promised the government to set up five branches within the year. On the other hand, there are now 22 companies here engaged in transcribing medical records of US hospitals and clinics, employing over 1,500 medical professionals; and 20 companies in cartoon animation, employing 2,500 artists. More later.

Revisiting Dapitan

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Antonio J. Montalvan II

NOVELTY, not depth. I have always thought that seems to be the mark of today's young. A friend from UP days, Tom Talledo, recently sent me this text message: "Ours is the time of fantastic voyage but crass destination; of megamalls but petty concerns; of fast food but slow digestion; of post-modern texts but primitive intentions."

Teaching the young is a difficult task where one gets tangled in relentless competition with popular media for their attention. And, definitely, the latter is more beguiling to this present generation. The classroom has probably become the most boring spot on earth.

It was with that thought in mind that I, together with 65 students, decided to embark on a weekend trip to Dapitan City, the place of exile of our national hero, Jose Rizal. This was no first time for me. I had gone to Dapitan twice in the past.

I must admit, though, that I had this ambivalent feeling toward the national hero. Rizal the man was a tapestry of multiple talents and I have had no problem with that. But I find myself insecure with the Rizal who wanted only reforms in the social and political system. Of course, we know that Rizal's greatness was shown not just in his being a reformist but also in his martyrdom, the event that sparked the Philippine revolution.

But more than my ambivalence was the coldness and apathy of my students toward Rizal. I am being polite, in fact. Not a few of them had demanded in class that the government abolish Rizal as a college subject. Not only were they fed up with him; they thought Rizal had no more significance in this exciting hi-tech, borderless world.

The trip to Dapitan took all of eight hours, too long for a restless generation, although certainly made much more convenient by the smooth highways of Misamis Occidental and Zamboanga del Norte. Then there was the 15-minute ferry crossing across the scenic and narrow Panguil Bay. At that point, I knew that the trip had started to captivate my class, whose idea of *joie de vivre* certainly did not include Rizal.

When we reached Dapitan, there was no more mistaking that the tide had turned in favor of the national hero. Dapitan is all about Rizal. The whole city (tiny as it is) is a living Rizaliana. Street names are consistently Rizal's: Noli me Tangere, Leonor Rivera, Mi Retiro, Crisostomo Ibarra. One student excitedly pointed out that there was even a small bakery named Rizal Bakeshop. This was too unbelievable coming from a disinterested generation.

Along the way to Dapitan, they kept asking if this or that city we passed by had a Gaisano, SM, or Jollibee. It suddenly didn't matter to them that in Dapitan there was not even a single Internet café.

It had dawned on them—not unlike a bolt of lightning, perhaps—that in Dapitan, Rizal was a hero and to denigrate him there, a town where there simply was unabashed pride for him, was simply not advisable. And we were not even at the Talisay shrine just as yet. But the cameras had started to click at Santa Cruz beach, where Rizal first set foot in Dapitan one dark evening, his path lighted only by a *farol de combate*; and then at the town plaza where his relief map of Mindanao was; and at the spot in the St. James Church where he stood each Sunday to hear Mass. Across the plaza was the site of what used to be the Casa Real where Rizal first stayed in the company of town *comandante* Ricardo Carnicero. All these were, at that point, overwhelming for this unbelieving bunch of young people.

The Talisay shrine naturally became a feast for them. "Leonor is the prettiest of them all," noted one student after viewing the collection of photographs of Rizal's girlfriends inside the museum. And how they madly scrambled for souvenirs—anything they could bring back home to show they had been to the Rizal shrine.

By this time, Rizal was no more than a national hero to them; he had become the human being who once trodded the paths of the idyllic retreat called Talisay. No one minded the fact that the houses in the Rizal estate were all replicas. Who cares, they thought. The old women Rizalistas, who tended the grounds of the shrine and offered healing rubs to tourists and guests, were ambushed by a barrage of questions. Among them: "Where was the Rizal baby buried?" "Over there under the *calachuchi* trees," said one Rizalista, although I had already told the students what Ambeth Ocampo had said—that to this day the location of the skeletal remains of Rizal's baby inside the estate has not been found. But never mind, the whole experience was in itself a discovery for them.

I do not have to say that at the end of the field trip, my class had become a Rizal Admiration Society. They learned their lesson. And now they do not wish Rizal to be abolished as a college subject.

Too often educators are indifferent to the classroom that lies beyond the walls of our schools. Too often we do not see that it is the learning more than the classroom, the persons more than the statistics, that count.

* * *

Last Saturday, Oct. 9, was her birthday. Her circle of closest friends, mostly her first cousins whom she had grown up with in the tightly knit community of her youth—and whom we fondly called the "Golden Girls"— are all dead now. She has outlived them all. My mother, Mercedes Roa Montalvan, has just turned 88 years old.

* * *

Comments to monta@sni.ph

Chance to pray

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

SALAT, or prayer, is required of every Muslim five times a day—at specific times during the day. The times have different names and change from day to day and week to week. For example, this week the various formal prayer times would be: *Fajr* (pre-dawn, performed before sunrise; for this week, the time would be 4:34 a.m. from Monday to Saturday, and 4:35 a.m. on Sunday); *Dhuhr* (noontime, this week, 11:42 a.m. on Monday and Tuesday, 11:41 from Wednesday to Sunday); *'Asr* (late afternoon: 3:03 p.m. today, 3:02 p.m. from Tuesday to Saturday and 3:01 p.m. on Sunday); *Maghrib* (sunset, just after the sun goes down: 5:39 p.m. today, 5:38 p.m. on Tuesday and Wednesday, 5:37 p.m. on Thursday and Friday, 5:36 p.m. Saturday and Sunday); and *'Isha* (evening, before retiring for the night: 6:45 p.m. for Monday and Tuesday; 6:44 p.m. for Wednesday and Thursday and 6:43 p.m. for Friday and Saturday; 6:42 p.m. for Sunday). Obviously for Muslims, it is better to pray together at these times, led by an Imam. The desire of Muslims to pray together has, in fact, become an issue in Greenhills.

The Greenhills shopping center has, in recent years, undergone a social transformation. From the genteel, slightly sleepy shopping center of old, frequented by prominent and wealthy families in the Greenhills neighborhoods, it became a center for electronics and computers; it has also become a sort of flea market and bazaar. With the introduction of bazaars featuring jewelry, textiles, clothing and things such as pirated DVDs, many Muslim merchants have taken to working there. This has been the cause of unease for Greenhills residents, who are worried about the security implications of having so many Muslims from Mindanao in their midst. These concerns have solidified in the opposition of some Greenhills residents and shopkeepers to a decision by Ortigas & Co. Ltd., which manages the Greenhills Shopping Center, to build a mosque or community prayer center.

The opposition is serious, determined and has big names associated with it, including longtime Greenhills resident, publisher Max Soliven. According to Soliven, the organized opposition includes the "presidents, chairmen, and leading members of the Greenhills Associations of San Juan, and the leaders of 30 condominium buildings around the Greenhills Shopping Center." In his Sunday column, Manong Max explains his opposition saying the mosque "would provide a 'sanctuary' and a 'base' not just for peaceful Muslim traders and the few Muslim residents in West Crame, but for Moro troublemakers from the notorious 'Golden Mosque' district in Quiapo as well as from controversial areas in Taguig where another Mosque and Islamic district were established during the Marcos-Imelda hegemony. The fact is that many of the Greenhills vendors come from Quiapo and Taguig already. 'Why take the risk of attracting Moro jihadis, gangsters, or violent types into our midst when the Muslims doing business in Greenhills are mostly non-residents and transients?' the residents testily ask. 'This is not an anti-Muslim attitude. We're simply defending our homes from probable threat.'"

Greenhills residents have proposed a compromise: turn the existing chapel in the shopping center into a non-denominational or an ecumenical "prayer room," where "Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, and everyone who seek to pray or meditate can use the same Prayer Room, and not get a 'headquarters' in what basically is a shopping center or place of commerce." This is certainly more reasonable than the more hard-line position of some Greenhills residents, which was expressed by a Greenhills president and quoted by Soliven: "If it's all right for the Moros to have an Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao—indeed, Basilan even voted to join the ARMM only the other year—why are they complaining about our right to demand an Autonomous Region of Christian Greenhills? That's reconciliation, too, isn't it? Our nation's Constitution justifies and protects the ARMM, and nobody complains that the Muslims in that Muslim Autonomous Region are biased, bigoted, or prejudiced against Christians. Why can't the Christians have, in their own community, such a right protected, too, by our Constitution and our laws?'"

I have seen the Muslims in Greenhills gathered together in hallways and other makeshift locations, kneeling on the floor and praying, as non-Muslim shoppers, with curiosity and fear on their faces, stroll by and stare at them. Surely, considering the requirements of Islam, and the sizeable number of Muslims who show up for work in Greenhills, they are entitled to pray in a place that affords them some dignity, quiet and peace. Turning the existing Catholic chapel into a prayer room might help, but raises the question of turning over consecrated space to non-Catholics. To avoid offending non-Catholics, the chapel would have to be stripped of all its Catholic iconography. It seems the only solution is the one being proposed by Ortigas and Co.: to build a prayer room, specifically for the Muslims.

But then you have the opposition of Greenhills residents. It is an opposition based on experience, but also, on an unhealthy dose of bigotry. In large part, the solutions being offered are unsatisfactory because of ignorance of the requirements of Islam. Given the strict and periodic prayer times required, could there be any other solution than building a place for Muslims to pray in? Unless Greenhills residents go to the extreme of forbidding Muslims to work in Greenhills, I don't think there is.

* * *

Comments welcome at www.quezon.ph

Missing section

IT'S probably a sign of the times.

The newspaper's Job Market section is attracting a lot of readers. I have been receiving letters from readers coming from different parts of the country asking why their copy of the INQUIRER on Sunday does not contain that section. They have an "I wuz robbed" feeling for not being able to read about available job opportunities.

READERS' ADVOCATE

Raul J. Palabrica

A reader, Eric Montoya of Malasiqui, Pangasinan, is angry about the absence of the Job Market section in the copies of the newspaper being distributed in his place. He wrote: "I do not read any other newspaper except yours. This letter is about something that has been bothering me for weeks. I do not know if you deliberately decided not to include that section for your readers in the provinces or you are not aware of this fact at all.

"Because of this, I have resorted to buying other newspapers on Sundays just to keep (myself) updated with the latest job openings in Manila and other parts of the country. No matter what your reason, I feel it is really unfair that we do not get the complete copy of the INQUIRER on Sundays because, in a sense, you are depriving your provincial readers of opportunities.

"It is selective dissemination of information and it is very, very unfair. More so, we also buy your newspaper at an even higher rate than in Manila, but we do not get our money's worth. It's also unfair that we do not get the same amount of information as what readers in Manila get, even though we pay more money.

"I also tried going to Dagupan City, which is near our town to check, and I found out that, like the copies we get in Malasiqui, there is no Job Market section included in the copies on newsstands in that city. I would like to correct my earlier statement, I am not bothered—I am enraged."

Target audience

I sympathize with the reader and with those who are similarly situated and feel the same way. It can be very frustrating to look forward to reading a section of the newspaper first thing in the morning and not to find it.

What a lousy way to start the day for people who consider the INQUIRER a mental "wakeupper," just like their favorite coffee. It can adversely affect one's mood for the rest of the day.

From my talk with the circulation and marketing staffs of the INQUIRER, I learned that the Job Market section was initially conceived to be distributed only in Metro Manila; it was not meant for nationwide circulation.

No, it had nothing to do with discriminating against the "*promdis*" and favoring "imperial Manila."

There are two reasons for the limited distribution: first, most jobseekers are in Metro Manila and the companies that have job openings are based in the metropolis; second, newspaper sheets (the most expensive component of newspaper publication) will go to waste if copies of the section are sent to parts of the country that will not benefit from the information contained in it.

There is also an ecological angle to the scheme: every page that is saved means fewer trees cut and converted to newsprint. This, plus recycling old newspapers and using recycled ink, is the INQUIRER's contribution to the international campaign to protect the environment.

The idea of limiting Job Market's reach to Metro Manila prompted a second look when the newspaper received numerous requests for copies of that section from readers outside the National Capital Region. They felt they have as much right as their Metro Manila counterparts to know the "work wanted" advertised in the INQUIRER.

Distribution areas

Besides, many of the companies that place advertisements in that section (for example, Shoemart, Gaisano and the call centers) have expanded their operations to cities and provinces outside of Metro Manila. They prefer to source their employees from their new business areas.

With these considerations in mind, the INQUIRER started distributing early this year the Job Market section to other parts of the country, outside Metro Manila.

Enumerating the areas where the section is now in circulation will be tedious, so I will instead name the places where, for the time being, it is not yet available, namely, Tacloban, Surigao, Butuan, Zamboanga, Palawan, Mindoro, Isabela, Tuguegarao and Bicol.

Incidentally, the circulation staff told me that Job Market made its debut in Pangasinan yesterday. I hope this bit of good news will make the reader from Malasiqui less angry at the newspaper.

The Job Market section will be distributed in more areas depending on the demand for it by the affected readers and on the areas of operation of the companies that advertise in it.

At the rate local and foreign investors are discovering the advantages—such as, lower cost of living, tax breaks and highly motivated skilled employees—of putting up their business outside densely populated Metro Manila, it will just be a matter of time before Job Market gets to cover the whole country.

* * *

The readers' advocate may be reached at the following address: "The Readers' Advocate" c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City. Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

THEY SAID

'Jueteng' ignoramus

"If the government does not even know the already well-known big time *jueteng* operators in Luzon, then what does it know?"

—Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz's reply to Malacañang's challenge that he present a list of officials receiving jueteng money

All-around focus

"You have to be interested in all segments of the economy. We can't just focus on the big corporations and ignore the small ones. Because the small ones feed the big ones."

—Former Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad

The INQUIRER is a member of the
PHILIPPINE PRESS INSTITUTE
The National Association of Philippine Newspapers

Rich country bled dry

"THE PHILIPPINES is a rich country which pretends to be poor."

Remember this remark made by a former director of the Philippine Coconut Authority?

The Philippines is, indeed, a rich country. But it is being bled dry by some of our officials and employees in government, and also by citizens who sell their votes during elections.

Take this case. While everybody was sleeping, a local government unit official purchased some 70 units of a generic personal computer at an unconscionably high price of P92,850 per unit. Other LGUs had purchased the same kind of computer at only half the price.

Of course, the transaction was made possible with the "blessings" of some unscrupulous government auditors who claimed that the price was "within tolerable limit" when it should have not been "tolerated" in the first place. This is the kind of transaction in government which bleeds the coffers of our country dry. The savings in price, if the purchase was only made fair and regular (amounting to millions of pesos), could have been spent for some other worthy projects. But no, they bled our country dry because of personal avarice.

Remember the Diosdado Macapagal Boulevard caper?

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

Our country would not be in a "fiscal crisis" if only our officials in government have the conscience and moral firmness to perform the kind of service expected of them and for which they were sworn to uphold.

God save our country (the Queen) from the so-called "fiscal crisis."

—MANUEL C. FULGAR SR.,
Poblacion Norte,
Barcelona, Sorsogon

Extra work for journalists

DON'T you think Conrad de Quiros was ridiculously vague in his column, "Necessary evil"? (PDI, 9/13/04) He wrote, "We want to deal with the difficult task at hand, we need a leader who is honest, upright and forthright, not one who lies, cheats and steals. We want to survive the crisis, we need a necessary good, not a necessary evil. Even if that has to take the form of another Edsa."

First of all, is he implying that we can survive the impending fiscal crisis if the people take to the streets and oust President Macapagal-Arroyo? Then, who does he think should replace her? Noli de Castro? Fernando Poe Jr.? Or is he supporting some sort of another election? I can't believe he was insinuating that political instability could solve a serious economic problem.

In addition, what made him think that the Filipinos are willing to "risk" the status quo (no matter how awful it is) just to replace Ms Arroyo based on an unfounded case of election fraud? There is no reported solid evidence officially brought forth against Ms Arroyo (to my knowledge) in the same way that there are no way we can be sure that her opponents did not cheat as well. We just have to trust our legal system and let the Presidential Electoral Tribunal rule over this matter.

De Quiros could have been respectable had he done his own investigation—that is, gather tangible evidence and present it to the PET—and not just superficially build his case with surveys on public perception. On the other hand, I agree with him that we should get rid of the "necessary evil" or "lesser evil" concepts and seek for the "necessary good." But this means focusing not just on the winners of the elections or those perceived to have the "machinery to cheat" but on all the politicians.

This requires vigilance on everyone's part as well as extra work from journalists (like De Quiros) to investigate and present solid facts and not just speculate or suspect.

—RICHARD ABALOS,
rdabalos@yahoo.com

It's 'philfedeaf'

THANK YOU for publishing my letter, "Respect linguistic, cultural rights of the deaf." (PDI, 9/28/04)

However, our e-mail address was misspelled as philedeaf@yahoo.com. The correct spelling is philfedeaf@yahoo.com.

—MARITES RAQUEL
ESTILLER-CORPUZ,
vice president,
Philippine Federation of the Deaf;
Philippine director,
FSL Dictionary Project

Freeze unexplained wealth of grafters

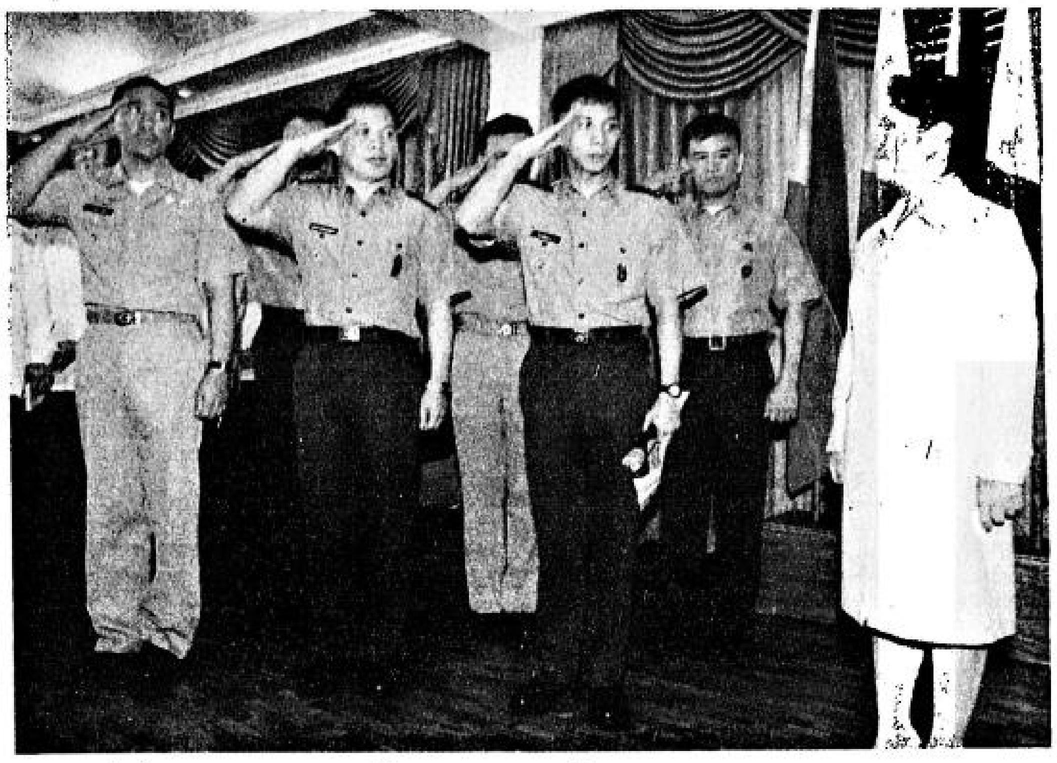
THIS is our reaction to the Sept. 18 INQUIRER news story, "Usec was sacked—GMA."

We firmly believe that firing or accepting the resignation of public officials suspected of being involved in irregularities, is not enough. They should be investigated and, if warranted, prosecuted by the Office of the Ombudsman *motu propio* (on its own accord), which is permitted under the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act.

We also firmly believe that we should follow what Hong Kong's High Commission Against Graft is doing to effectively fight graft and corruption in that territory—that is, freeze all the known assets of the suspected public officials which cannot be explained.

This way, President Macapagal-Arroyo and her administration will be taken seriously by the Filipino people when she says she will stop graft and corruption during her term of office. This way, too, Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo, a political appointee, will gain the respect of the Filipino people as an official who prosecutes wickedness in the government without fear or favor.

—PROCOPIO S. BELTRAN JR.,
president,
Nagmamalasakit na mga
Manananggol ng mga
Manggagawang Pilipino
(Manananggol),
Rm. 236 Regina Building,
Escolta, Manila



Magdalo case must be pursued

THE NATIONAL ROTC Alumni Association Inc. (NARAA), whose members compose 75 percent of the Armed Forces of the Philippines officers corps, together with its reservist and retiree members, hereby expresses its position on the published apology of the Magdalo mutineers.

It is our hope that the apology, which was accepted by the President, is a sincere act of contrition that will hopefully lead to the healing of some of the nation's wounds.

However, apology or no apology, the cases against the Magdalo mutineers must be pursued to secure the integrity of our judicial processes and the rule of law.

The decision whether to grant amnesty or pardon to the Magdalo mutineers should come only after the court has ruled on their cases.

We strongly protest the consignment of the Magdalo case as another military misadventure that will rest in oblivion by virtue of an apology.

We strongly believe that the law should be allowed to run its due course in order to prevent the emergence of a culture of adventurism in the fractious side of the military.

—LT. GEN. WILLIAM K.
HOTCHKISS III (ret.), chair,
NARAA Inc.; COMMODORE
AMADO A. SANGLAY, president-
Naraa PN Chapter; COL.
LEONARDO ENRIQUEZ (ret.),
president, NARAA PAF Chapter;
BRIG. GEN. ROBERT C. GERVACIO
(ret.), vice president, NARAA PA
Chapter, National ROTC Alumni
Association Inc., 26 P. Santos Ave.,
Camp Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo, QC

AFP's resolve and integrity

PLEASE allow us this rejoinder to Amando Doronila's Sept. 29 column titled "GMA buys time on amnesty for mutineers." Doronila wrote, "Delicate negotiations to end the siege were carried out by no less than the chief of staff and senior military leaders, using their PMA network on the framework to soften the harsh edges of conflict."

We feel that Doronila's portrayal of events is imprecise. Throughout the mutiny the negotiations with the mutineers were initiated by retired military officers and the classmates of officers who laid siege to Oakwood. It is unfair for anybody to even imply that the leadership of the Armed Force of the Philippines vacillated in its constitutional duty to protect the people and the state. While it may be true that the "PMA network" contributed to the resolution of the incident, the AFP has shown that there are higher ideals that transcend fraternal ties and friendship, and these are the Constitution and our oaths as professional members of our country's armed forces.

We are thankful that the crisis was defused peacefully and quickly. But let there be no doubt on the capability and resolve of our armed forces to quell all threats that seek to undermine our democratic institutions and overthrow duly constituted authority.

While we respect Doronila's analysis, we are obliged to set the record straight so as to preclude doubts on the stability of the chain of command and the institutional integrity of the AFP.

—LT. COL. DANIEL A. LUCERO,
GSC, Public Information Office,
Armed Forces of the Philippines,
Camp Gen. Emilio Agunaldo,
Quezon City

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Meal for 4 (choice of Whole Roast Chicken or Pork & Chicken Barbecue Platter with 2 Side Dishes, Bar Cookies or Fruit Jelly and 12 oz. softdrinks)

PARK SCHEDULE
Back to 5 days a week starting August 18 to December 12
Wednesday to Friday 10:00 am to 7:00 pm
Saturday & Sunday 10:00 am to 10:00 pm
Fireworks every weekend at 9:00 pm.

Be sure that your tickets are valid! Buy only from authorized ticket outlets: Makati Sales Office, Park Front Gate and Ticketworld outlets. For inquiries, please call 8302111 to 16 or 8436073 to 78 or visit www.enchantedkingdom.com.ph. TicketWorld

Revisit the teachers

THE PHILIPPINES celebrated World Teachers Day last Oct. 5. This year's theme was: "Quality Teachers for Quality Education." The Teachers Network requests the other stakeholders in education: students, parents, media and government to pause and reflect on the critical role teachers play in helping shape our future.

Sensational issues hardly give front-page space for teacher issues. This, however, should not belie the esteemed role of the teacher, who has been known for fidelity to his/her job despite a growling stomach and devalued take-home pay.

But things have changed. We are now alarmed by the growing number of teachers seeking greener pastures in other countries. As for those who have opted to remain in the job, the work conditions that are being observed and reported have not been encouraging for quality performance. We have to do something to stop the "teacher diaspora," lest our educational system continue to deteriorate.

Paying tribute to the teachers should be a pleasant, inspiring and encouraging pat on the shoulder. But beyond the little sweet thoughts and bunches of roses, let us do a serious revisiting of our teachers' working conditions, qualifications, incentives and motivations; and let us find out how these could give life to the teachers' rights and privileges.

In keeping with this year's theme, let us reflect on how we can work together on specific concerns: recruiting the best for the teaching profession, retaining them in the job and giving them the best continuing professional education. Hope is not gone. Other Josette Biyos are in the offing, and other planets are just waiting to be named after them.

—RENE C. ROMERO,
convenor, Teachers Network,
c/o Philippine Normal University,
Taft Avenue, Manila

It's 'bawal magkasakit' for GSIS members

I AM a permanent government employee and I have been a member of the Government Service Insurance System since Jan. 3, 1978.

I had to retire on March 31, 2004 after losing my peripheral vision in both eyes due to a cerebral vascular accident (stroke). Due to this sight problem (tunnel vision), I lost my sense of direction and couldn't go to my office without any guide. I was thus forced to apply for disability retirement.

I submitted all the necessary pertinent papers, including the eye test results duly signed by my ophthalmologist. I know very well that I am entitled to either permanent total disability or permanent partial disability benefits. To my surprise, my claim was disapproved, and I was categorized as qualified only to a regular retirement upon reaching the age of 60.

With this experience, I would like to warn all members of the GSIS that for them it is "*Bawal magkasakit* (Getting sick is prohibited)!"

—ROLANDO G. RAVELO,
18 San Vicente St.,
Pacita Complex I,
San Pedro, Laguna

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Across the NATION

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Kidnappers free Davao businessman

MATI, Davao Oriental—Heavily armed suspects yesterday snatched a prominent businessman here but released him about two hours later.

In Pagadian City, an unidentified suspect shot dead a scion of a Filipino-Chinese family while the victim was attending a Sunday service in a church there.

Mati town police chief Senior Insp. Sergio Manigo said Efren Dupa, who owns several businesses in the province, was abducted inside one of his hardware stores at the new public market here around 10:30 a.m.

He said a son of the businessman told police that the five security guards detailed at the hardware tried to deter the suspects by exchanging fire with them.

Manigo said three policemen, who responded to the incident also helped the escorts battle the 10 attackers but did not succeed in freeing him.

SPO2 Ludicito Lindo, one of responding policemen, said they stopped firing at the suspects after they threatened to kill the victim.

The 52-year old Dupa, who owns several gasoline stations, hardware stores, fishpens and shopping centers in Davao Oriental, was the object of a foiled kidnap attempt in 2000.

The group, which tried to snatch him then, backed-off when his security escorts put up a fight.

Police said the suspects in Sunday's abduction of the businessman fled onboard a pickup truck they stole from a trader in Baganga town.

Manigo said they found Dupa in Barangay Dugmanon here around 1 p.m.

The village, which is Mati's border with San Isidro town, is about 30 kilometers from the poblacion.

Dupa declined to comment when asked why the suspects abandoned him there.

"I am so sorry, I do not want to be interviewed. I am still in shock, I need to take a rest. Please understand me," he later told reporters. He also declined from issuing any statement to the police.

"He refused to give important details to us, I could not understand why," Manigo said.

In Pagadian City, Supt. Ramon Ochotorena, city police chief, identified the victim as Alexander Louie Chan, whose family runs a Jollibee store in the city.

Ochotorena said Chan, who was in his early 40s, was shot in the head three times while he was standing during the singing of the service's final song.

He said the gunman sat behind the victim during the service. Churchgoers were thrown into panic and ran outside the church. The gunman casually walked towards a waiting companion aboard a motorcycle, and fled. *Ferdinand O. Zuasola and Hernan P. dela Cruz, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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TULINGAN, or yellowfin tuna, is the lifeblood of the Lanao economy. Locals line up to savor the fish during the Tulingan Festival.
RICHEL V. UMEL/CONTRIBUTOR

Muslim, Christian villagers join hands to protect environment

By Ryan D. Rosauro
PDI Mindanao Bureau

SULTAN NAGA DIMAPORO, Lanao del Norte—Donning colorful and artistic costumes that reflect the rich mix of Muslim and Christian culture of residents here, teenage schoolchildren compete in the street dancing contest during the festivities held as tribute to the town's primary product, the yellowfin tuna, or *tulingan*.

Now on its second year, the annual celebration dubbed the Tulingan Festival coincides with the town's founding anniversary and the onset of the *tulingan*'s season of abundance, usually from October through February.

The festivities, held on Oct. 4, was an occasion to offer thanksgiving as well as a call to arms to protect the marine environment.

The catching of *tulingan* and other economically important marine products like clams, lobsters and squid is the predominant livelihood of some 40,000 townsfolk, many of whom live in 16 coastal villages facing the wide open Illana Bay.

Everyday, around 10 fish cars loaded mostly with *tulingan* from this town find their way to the cities of Pagadian, Iligan, Ozamis, and even Cagayan de Oro.

Decline

But for the past ten years, fishermen observed that the sizes of fish caught have been shrinking.

Then, they could easily catch large *tulingan* weighing up to 50 kilos. "(Now) you're lucky to get fish weighing 10 kilos. The large fishes are now getting farther away from our traditional fishing areas," a fisherman said.

Fishermen wanting to catch bigger fishes venture toward deeper parts of the bay.

Mayor Motalib Dimaporo said they traced the problem to the massive cutting of the town's mangrove forests beginning some 20 years ago, and the persistence of fishermen using destructive methods like dynamite.

He also cited illegal logging as a prevailing law enforcement headache that threatens to affect the marine habitat if left unabated.

Dimaporo related that the resulting mangrove deforestation today was mostly done by coastal villagers as a community action against armed outlaws, who use the dense mangrove forest as their lairs and hideaways.

"Felling (the mangrove) could have been the best option they thought then, and so we are left with no choice but rehabilitate it to sustain our fishing activities," he said.

In undertaking this fight of protecting and rehabilitating the town's marine environment, Muslim and Christian townsfolk are provided a staging ground to further deepen their unity and enhance cordial relations.

Already, a mangrove rehabilitation program is underway for a number of years, spearheaded by a nongovernment organization and some fisherfolk associations.

Based on popular agreement, some 10 hectares of marine sanctuary off-limits to fishing activities was also set aside to provide space for fish breeding.

About two months ago, Task Force Octopus, a law enforcement team composed of police authorities and community leaders, was created to combat the remaining group of dynamite fishers.

Education

Education activities are also planned as a proactive response to the dynamite fishing problem.

"For most of the town's history, the question of religious affinity is never an issue in community life. It is not surprising that we are generally united in this effort especially because it affects our economic base and determines our collective survival," explains Allan Sanoria, a public school principal and member of the Philippine Coast Guard Auxiliaries.

Sanoria said the only time tension developed between Muslim and Christian residents was during the outbreak of the secessionist rebellion in the 1970s, when a large number of non-Moro settlers left the town out of fear.

However, there was no shooting war experienced in the town, only saber-rattling episodes. But these were enough to send the Christian settlers packing away.

"Later, when tensions subsided, it was easier to repair relations because not much emotional hang-ups were created between the two cultural factions, unlike in other conflict areas where lives were lost," Sanoria said.

He said they realized that there are far greater stakes in reaching out to each other and bonding together than building walls merely on the basis of cultural differences.

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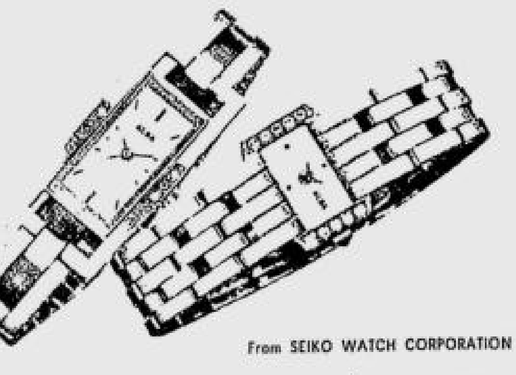

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'Lumads' OK mining in S. Cotabato

KORONADAL CITY—The Catholic Church here said it respected the decision of the B'laan tribespeople in Tampakan, South Cotabato allowing the operation of a mining company in their villages.

The B'laans had previously worked with the Diocese of Marbel against the activities of the Australian firm Western Mining Corp. (WMC) in the hinterlands of Tampakan.

With the backing of the diocese's Social Action Center (SAC), the tribal group, which claimed that mining would destroy their livelihood, succeeded in shooing away the company.

But recently, at least five B'laan tribal councils, which joined the anti-WMC fight, signed an agreement with the Filipino-Australian company Sagittarius Mining Inc. (SMI).

Juanito Malid, Salnaong tribal chieftain and former community organizer of the diocese's justice and peace desk, said they decided to support SMI because practically, all the B'laans were supporting it.

He said the firm was also fulfilling its promise to develop the villages.

Fr. Romeo Catedral, SAC director, told reporters here on Friday that they were saddened by the decision.

He alleged that the B'laans gave their support only because SMI lured them with monetary rewards, vehicles, infrastructure and scholarships.

"We don't call it bribery but deception. We believe that they were forced to go with the flow because of the present development projects, but with this they are endangering the future generation," he said.

But he said the Church would continue the fight against SMI and other companies wanting to exploit the wealth of the area.

The hinterlands of Tampakan and the adjoining areas of Kiblawan in Davao del Sur and Columbio in Sultan Kudarat was reported to contain one of Asia's biggest copper and gold deposits.

Catedral said SMI's activities in the area were detrimental to the indigenous flora and fauna "and could leave grave negative impact on the entire biodiversity of the region."

"Any mining operations within the area would adversely affect the water supply in South Cotabato, North Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat and General Santos City," he said.

But Rolando Doria, SMI's overall project coordinator, said his company's commitment to responsible mining could be the main reason the tribespeople gave their approval.

He said their operations "will never cause damages to lives and properties."

Samirh Musali, village chair of Datal Biao in Columbio town, said they knew that mining would not make them rich.

"All we want is for our constituents, particularly those in Sitio Salnaong, to have a decent life, with ready access to basic social services like education, health and livelihood," he said.

Doria said that if the clergy was serious about preserving the environment, they should work with SMI.

"We need the help of the Church people and other vigilant groups in the implementation of our environment protection program. They can call our attention if they think what we are doing is detrimental to the environment," Doria said. *Aquiles Zonio and Jeffrey Tupas, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Politics, land cited in failed ₱2.5-B seaport project

By Emir Emano Gamis
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

SORSOGON CITY—Investors in the ₱2.5-billion international seaport in Castilla town have backed out due to land acquisition problems.

The proposed "all-weather" seaport was expected to employ some 40,000 people in Castilla and create economic boom in Sorsogon.

Circum Pacific Terminals Inc. (CPTI), the project proponent, had cited the location of the seaport as an ideal shelter for vessels during bad weather and more accessible from Manila to the south as ships would not have to pass through the treacherous San Bernardino Strait.

CPTI had lost interest in pursuing the project after failing to acquire some portions of land along the main site of the proposed seaport, based on the hearing conducted by the Provincial Board last month.

The portions of land are owned by businessman George Arellano, with 253,797 square meters, and Rafael Lasalita, caretaker of Francisco Lasalita, with 11,829 sq.m. The proposed site has a total land area of about 65 hectares.

Castilla Mayor Renato Laurenaria had accused Gov. Raul Lee of blocking the project and "influencing" Arellano, whose land was where the groundbreaking ceremony was held on January, despite the latters' earlier approval to sell his land.

The Arellano-owned restaurant in Sorsogon City even catered food for the groundbreaking events, showing his assent to sell his land; while all of Lasalita's family wanted to sell their land, except for Rafael, Laurenaria said.

Arellano opted to lease his land for the 35-year build-operate-transfer contract between CPTI and Castilla. CPTI did not find it acceptable.

Lee countered that the project was just on paper and that Laurenaria failed to submit the necessary documents to concerned government agencies.

"It seems there is a breakdown of communication. A project of this magnitude can't bog down by a counterproposal of one person who owns only 1.5 to 3 hectares," Arellano said.

During the hearing, Laurenaria also argued that they could not secure other legal requirements since the project had bogged down in the land acquisition phase alone.

Gemma Belgica, who brokered between CPTI and Castilla, said the investor lost interest in the project "because of [a] series of setbacks."

But she clarified that the business plan CPTI submitted to the National Economic and Development Authority meant partial compliance of the feasibility study.

A full study would have been submitted if the land problem did not crop up, she said.

Vice Gov. Kruni Escudero, Neda regional director Marlene Rodriguez, and representatives of the Department of Agrarian Reform, Provincial Assessor's Office and other agencies, called for unity to continue the project.

SENIOR CITIZENS WEEK
These elderly citizens join the week-long annual celebration for seniors during a parade in Baguio City. TOOTS SOBERANO

Funding woes won't stop Sorsogon festival

SORSOGON CITY—This year's Kasanggayahan Festival will proceed even without the usual funding from the provincial government, the head of the foundation tasked with overseeing the event said.

Msgr. Francisco Monje, Kasanggayahan Foundation Inc. (KFI) president, said Gov. Raul Lee had informed him that the provincial government would not release the fixed grant of P300,000 for the celebration, to heed the national government's call for austerity measures.

"For me, it's not that we're relying on it. The provincial government has set the budget from the very start as its own obligation and duty in the promotion of Sorsogon's heritage and culture," Monje said in defense of criticisms that the KFI has relied solely from the government's doleout since the festival was first observed in 1994.

"In fact, every year the foundation has spent more than P300,000 to run the festival. We have not complained and we have not asked for more than P300,000 so how can it be said that we're relying on it?" he said.

Monje clarified that Lee still supported the celebration but the governor had asked them to remove activities that will involve big budget.

The festival, held from Oct. 17 to 23, started in Sorsogon in 1994, coinciding with the province's centennial celebration, and is considered the province's main festival along with the Pili Festival.

Due to the government's declaration of a fiscal crisis, even the provincial board has called for a simple celebration.

Monje said the festival would run only for one week, not the usual two weeks' celebration, and would have no cultural presentation and competition on Pantomina sa Tinampo, one of the main attractions.

Other events that will be retained in the program are the pilgrimage to Siuton, Magallanes—claimed to be the site of the first Mass in Luzon; trade fair, heritage lecture, and the cultural presentation "only in the city," according to Monje.

He stressed that the festival "has put Sorsogon in the map and slowly imbibes that (it) is not just a matter of dancing in the streets and parades but a celebration of our history, culture . . . and the heritage of Sorsogon."

"In fact, a lot of people might not know that last year, through the efforts of the DepEd, a lesson plan was made about Sorsogon history, geography and culture," he said.

The lesson is taken up the whole month of October from elementary to high school, according to Monje.

He noted that the pilgrimage to Magallanes is continuously drawing pilgrims as far as Albay and said that they hope the Pantomina sa Tinampo will draw more crowd as a pot luck street party will be held later as an added feature. *Emir Gamis, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Man runs amuck, kills 1, hurts 8

TUGUEGARAO CITY—A vendor was killed and eight others, including a 4-year-old girl, were wounded after a man, who police said was refused a meal in a market stall, ran amuck on Saturday night.

Police said Marlon Ramos of Alcala town, and a companion, Arnel Ventula, were in the old public market at about 6 p.m. Saturday.

When stall owners refused to serve them food, Ramos reportedly pulled out a knife and started stabbing anyone who came near him.

Police said Michael Chua, 22, a vendor, was killed while four others were wounded.

After the stabbing spree, Ramos, reports said, commandeered a tricycle and asked the driver to take him to the Buntun Highway. After he alighted, Ramos started attacking people there and wounded four others.

Police identified the wounded as Ernalyn Joy Mallilin, 4, Lucy Lagundi, Leticia Aquino, Adelina Balisi, Teresita Eclipse, Rhundee Balisi, Peter Roca and Alicia Aguilar.

Reports said Ramos later surrendered to policemen. Police were still looking for Ventula. *Estanislao Caldez, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Holdup man killed, 9 others nabbed in Bulacan, Pampanga

CAMP GEN. ALEJO SANTOS, Bulacan—A suspected member of a robbery group was killed while nine of his companions were separately arrested in Bulacan and in Pampanga on Friday.

Senior Supt. Felizardo Serapio Jr., Bulacan police director, identified the fatality as Edgardo San Roque, said to be a member of the Rivera-Lacanilao robbery group operating in Bulacan and Pampanga.

Serapio said San Roque engaged lawmen in a gunfight in Barangay Salapungan in Candaba.

Reports said his companions, brothers Bienvenido and Joel Lacanilao, brothers Cesar and Percival Adriano, Ferdinand Sampaga and Francisco Lusara were later arrested in San Miguel and San Ildefonso towns, both in Bulacan.

Serapio said three other suspects were arrested in San Luis, Pampanga.

He said policemen were about to serve arrest warrants to the suspects in their hideout in Candaba, Pampanga at about 7 a.m. when they opened fire at the lawmen.

The incident happened five hours after the group reportedly robbed a family in Barangay Salangan in San Miguel. The robbers took P150,000, pieces of jewelry and other valuables, and an Isuzu Crosswind van from the house of Fermin Malana.

Serapio said those arrested were involved in several robberies in Bulacan. *Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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ROUNDUP

Scholarship grants

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Forester's death probe

DAVAO CITY—President Macapagal-Arroyo has ordered a deeper police investigation into the Sept. 28 killing of a government forester, Mayor Rodrigo Duterte said. Ms Macapagal visited the wake of Isidro de la Peña on Friday last week. De la Peña, 60, was driving his niece to the school when a motorcycle-riding gunman shot him in Barangay Matina here. A suspect, Moises Potal, was later arrested based on information provided by witnesses. De la Peña was known for his strict enforcement of forestry laws.

Dennis Jay Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Housing for DENR workers

ILAGAN, Isabela—Environment Secretary Michael Defensor has approved the implementation of a socialized housing project for employees of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Isabela. Defensor, during a recent visit here, said the project was one of his flagship programs and would be implemented in other provinces. "We have at least 800,000 hectares classified as alienable and disposable land nationwide," he said. At least 71 DENR employees here will be given 200-square meter residential lots each. Defensor asked provincial DENR officer Felix Taguba to prepare the proclamation papers of a 2.12-hectare property in Barangay Osmeña for the project.

Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

DENR employee suspended

ILAGAN, Isabela—An employee of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Cagayan Valley was suspended for 90 days on Friday for allegedly demanding P70,000 from a farm owner. Alejandrino Cabanilla, land management specialist of the DENR-Cagayan Valley, is also facing an administrative investigation for the offense, Antonio Principe, DENR regional director, said. Principe said businessman Rogelio Uy earlier asked Cabanilla's help for the immediate approval of some documents so he could sell his farmland. Cabanilla reportedly sat on Uy's request for several months and allegedly demanded money to speed up his papers' processing.

Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Seaweed pilot areas

TUGUEGARAO CITY—The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources in Cagayan Valley has started developing the local seaweed industry with the establishment of pilot farm areas comprising at least 65 hectares in Buguey, Claveria, Sta. Teresita and Sta. Ana towns. Elpidio Palattao, BFAR seaweed action officer, said the bureau also made available more than 90 hectares of coastal and inland pilot areas in Gonzaga and Claveria. If these areas were planted with seaweed, which is made into cosmetics and pharmaceutical products, 2,365.54 metric tons could be harvested before the yearend, he said. Palattao said foreign investors were interested in financing the local seaweed industry.

Estanislao Caldez, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Cop, woman shot

QUEZON, Isabela—A policeman and a woman were shot and wounded by armed men during a bus robbery in Barangay Aurora here on Sunday. Police said PO1 Arnold Verbon, who was assigned in Nueva Vizcaya, exchanged gunfire with three men who robbed passengers of the Florida Bus. Verbon and another passenger, Jonalyn Munar, who was hit by a stray bullet, were taken to a hospital in Roxas town. Senior Supt. Napoleon Estilles, Isabela police director, said the robbers, who boarded the bus in Tuguegarao City, took away more than P41,000 and $1,201, and mobile phones from passengers, as well as Verbon's M- [illegible]

Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Seminary homecoming

SORSOGON CITY—The Our Lady of Peñafrancia Seminary in Bibincahan here is calling on all its graduates and those who had enrolled even for an hour to be part of the OLPS Alumni Homecoming 2004 on Oct. 16. The gathering is a dry run for the 60th anniversary celebration of the OLPS in 2005. For details, the alumni were told to call the OLPS Alumni Foundation Inc. or lawyer Jess Fumera, OLPS Alumni Association president, at (056)-2111993 or (0919)3186875.

Food help for poor kids

LEGAZPI CITY—Before the government's food assistance for at least five million families nationwide, some poor children had had their first taste of the food assistance, said Ma. Elena Caraballo, deputy director of the National Council for the Welfare of Children. President Macapagal-Arroyo has released P5 million for the "Bright Child Project," which aims to give supplemental feeding to children in nutritionally depressed municipalities in the country, according to Caraballo. The amount covers a daily meal for children for 120 days. Caraballo said children from poor towns in Bicol and Eastern Visayas were the priority recipients. She noted that Bicol, with 17 municipalities under dire poverty, had the most nutritionally depressed children in the country.

Cherryl Gurrobat, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Bishops ask poor to donate to gov't

DAVAO CITY—Amid reports of hunger stalking thousands of families in the country, Catholic bishops are urging the poor to give away everything they could to the country "to prick the conscience of the rich."

Catholic schools will start collecting donations from the poor—drivers, housemaids and laundry women—and hand them over to government officials and legislators so that they, in turn, would give up their pork barrel and help solve the fiscal crisis, Davao Archbishop Fernando Capalla said Thursday.

"No one is so poor that he cannot give, no one is so rich that he cannot receive," Marist Bro. Manuel de Leon, director-at-large of the Catholic Education Association of the Philippines (CEAP), said when asked about the move to generate help from the poor despite reports of hunger due to rising costs of food and other basic commodities.

"It's not the amount that is important here but the symbolic act of giving," said Capalla after meeting with 43 heads of schools on Wednesday to discuss the move.

"Seeing that the poor is giving away the last that they have to their country will prick the conscience of the rich and encourage them to do the same," said Capalla, who also heads the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP).

The heads of schools are all CEAP members from Mindanao. A similar meeting was held in Cebu in September, where 22 schools took part in the discussions. The CEAP has over 1,200 members nationwide, with student populations ranging from 200 to 13,000 each.

"We want to remind the people of the discipline of the Cross, the sacrificial element of fiscal discipline, for poor people to give their hard earned money to the government [to] prick the conscience of those who have more," he added.

He said the move followed his previous call for religious leaders to give up a portion of what they receive from the Church to help the government weather the fiscal crisis.

Capalla said every school would come up with creative ways to encourage the poor to give up something that they have to help the government.

Although the move might generate skepticism among some sectors, especially with the latest Social Weather Stations report on rising poverty in the country, Capalla said, "this has always been the teaching of the Church since the beginning of time."

"We know that we will be met by skepticism. but the point is not the amount that we give, but how it will help change the attitude of people," he said.

"We want to support the government's call for Alay Gobyerno, Alay Filipino, to promote fiscal discipline by encouraging people to live within their means, the lack of which had caused the fiscal crisis in the first place," he said.

Many people from the Visayas and Luzon have expressed willingness to give something to help the government, said Capalla. He refused to disclose more details pending the announcement after the CBCP meeting in Manila on Friday.

Aside from cash contribution, he said, everybody was encouraged to share time and talent for the government.

"Students can volunteer to clean the streets outside, or to contribute P1 for the usual things that have been neglected by the government. We might be offering collections to government officials, as a symbolic gesture for the people's love of country," he said. *Germelina Lacorte, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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[1] White, Faich, Borer, Makuch. Cardiovascular Thrombotic Events in Arthritis Trials of the Cyclooxygenase-2 Inhibitor Celecoxib. The American Journal of Cardiology. 2003:92;411-418.

[2] Graham et al presented at International Society of Pharmacoepidemiology August 2004 and accepted as an abstract at American College of Rheumatology, October 2004. In a retrospective study, no increased risk of heart attacks or sudden cardiac deaths relative to those who had not taken NSAID for at least 60 days.

[3] NDC, August 2004.

MILF rift hinders peace process

MEMBERS of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front practice marching inside Camp Darapanan in Maguindanao. The Philippines may be facing its last chance to end a 30-year-old conflict in Mindanao as younger Moro rebels swayed by radical groups are growing in influence. REUTERS

From page A1

dependence for Muslim-majority areas, leaving Mindanao stuck in conflict and poverty.

"I think the MILF is having a lot of trouble in their own ranks," said Zachary Abuza, a professor at Boston's Simmons College and expert on the Mindanao conflict.

"There's growing radicalism within the MILF that's scaring the older generation. At the same time, the general population—their constituency—is getting really war-weary," he said.

Division

Division in the MILF helps explain why it has found it so difficult to address international concerns about its links with militant groups such as Southeast Asia's Jemaah Islamiyah (JI).

Analysts say individual commanders may have kept links with the al-Qaida-linked JI, which has been blamed for a string of attacks in Southeast Asia, including the 2002 bombings of nightclubs on Indonesia's Bali island, without the MILF leadership's permission.

Despite expressing confidence in his group's unity, Murad voiced concern that the older generation may not be able to control a younger, more radical breed of MILF fighter for much longer.

"What we are afraid of is that the younger generation will replace the older generation of leaders and because they are more involved in the war, the possibility of them turning radical is very, very high," he told Reuters on Saturday.

Power struggle

Murad, 54, is deeply respected within the MILF, but is seen as more moderate than his predecessor, charismatic preacher Salamat Hashim who died of a heart attack last year.

In Kidapawan City, a group perceived to be siding with the MILF yesterday warned the rebel organization against rushing a final peace deal with the government.

Nashreen Pangadapun, secretary general of the Maradeka (Liberation), said history might repeat itself if the MILF signed an accord.

In the early '80s, Salamat, then deputy chair of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), founded the MILF with other ranking leaders because of the perception that MNLF chair Nur Misuari was veering away from their original demand of independence for the Bangsamoro.

In 1996, Misuari signed a peace deal with the Ramos administration and accepted the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao as a political settlement while the MILF continued to wage war against the government.

"Should a negotiated peace agreement be signed in the fashion the leaders of the MNLF did, another fundamentalist Moro group might sprout out of the MILF," Pangadapun said.

More radical

He said the new group would be more radical. "Our fear is that Murad is losing his influence over his people. That his (leadership) is getting weak and if that will continue the radicals will lord it over the leaders of the MILF," he said.

Pangadapun said some MILF leaders were already wary that Murad was becoming another Misuari.

"Their fear is that Murad will sign an agreement which is not reflective of the political aspiration of the Bangsamoro people," the Maradeka leader said.

Murad earlier said peace in Mindanao was "within our grasp" and that the MILF was "ready to sign with the government a negotiated political solution that is just, lasting and comprehensive in order to terminate the age-old conflict in Mindanao."

> The most civilized and practical way to solve the Moro problem is through a negotiated political settlement, says Murad

"The most civilized and practical way to solve the Moro problem is through a negotiated political settlement," Murad said.

Pangadapun said the agreement, which could largely be based on the government's draft proposal, could leave the Bangsamoro people with a sense of loss.

"The peace accord might not be very comprehensive ... (and) would not satisfy the desire of the people to put up a genuine self-governance," Pangadapun said.

Malaysian monitors

Murad has welcomed the arrival of Malaysian ceasefire monitors who are helping to end a bitter and lengthy conflict with government forces. The Malaysian team arrived in the Philippines on Saturday and were formally deployed in key areas in Mindanao yesterday.

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu said there was a good possibility that the 51-man contingent would visit Mt. Kararao, alleged lair of some 60 JI terrorists purportedly being coddled by some members of the rebel group.

"It's not in the itinerary but the peace monitors could always decide to go there if they see the need," Kabalu told the INQUIRER.

He said the United States and Australia should also participate in the inspection if only to "once and for all put to rest allegations that the MILF is coddling JI terrorists."

Murad said there would be no peace with Manila if sections in the military remained intent on fanning allegations that the MILF sheltered militants from JI.

"Frankly, we feel there are people in government who don't want peace in Mindanao," Murad said, stressing that while President Macapagal-Arroyo appeared sincere in negotiating, unnamed officials could be "manipulating the situation."

"This kind of position ruins the confidence-building process and disrupts the negotiations," he said.

US involvement

Continuing allegations about the JI may be designed to get the US military involved in Mindanao, a scenario that could cause further bloodshed, he warned.

Murad said that after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in the United States in 2001, the MILF closed all its camps in Mindanao to foreigners.

However, he admitted that in the past, Islamic scholars from the Middle East and even Europe and the United States were "ordinary visitors" to Camp Abubakar, once the MILF's main stronghold in Mindanao. *Reports from Reuters; AFP; Jeffrey M. Tupas, PDI Mindanao Bureau, and Christian V. Esguerra in Manila*

Studies on prayer power stir controversy

From page A1

one is clear about what constitutes a "dose." Some researchers have tested a few prayers a day by individual healers, while others have had entire congregations pray together.

Another problem concerns the mechanism by which prayer might be supposed to work. Some studies suggest that prayer might have a soothing effect that works like a placebo for believers who know they are being prayed for.

Resentment

Either way, many churchgoers resent the very notion that prayer is being subjected to scientific scrutiny.

"There's no way to put God to the test, and that's exactly what you're doing when you design a study to see if God answers your prayers," said the Rev. Raymond J. Lawrence Jr., director of pastoral care at New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Columbia University Medical Center.

The reverend's main objection: "This whole exercise cheapens religion, and promotes an infantile theology that God is out there ready to miraculously defy the laws of nature in answer to a prayer." *New York Times News Service*

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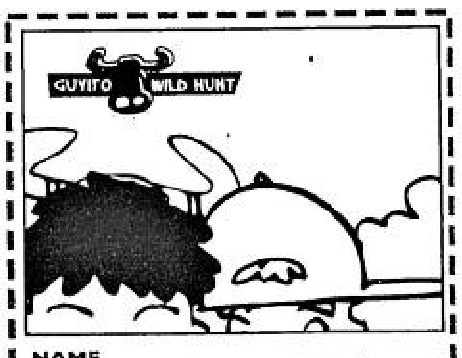

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Generals, solons linked to graft

From page A1

loyalty but this has never been questioned," the retired officer said.

He said he talked to Garcia about two months ago to inquire about the case of his [Garcia's] son, Ian Carl, who was held at a US airport last December for not declaring he had $100,000 in his possession.

The retired officer said Garcia apparently was not aware that US authorities were pursuing an investigation of him and his son.

"Garic was very confident because he was already cleared by the Armed Forces. *Sabi pa nga niya, ang mga heneral natin, sir, nagpabili noong eleksyon* (He said, sir, our generals, they allowed themselves to be bought in the last election)," the retired officer quoted Garcia as saying.

The source said Garcia also facilitated the release of funds that were channeled to "the presidential elections" allegedly in favor of one candidate.

The retired officer, however, would not elaborate. "Those things go without saying," he said.

He said Garcia also talked about money that the AFP had given to congressmen and senators who supported the AFP legislative agenda.

Shady list

Money was also allocated to "maintain" congressmen and senators who would endorse certain military contracts that might need congressional approval, the source said.

"The lobby fund is not illegal but the source, where it came from, it came from conversion, that makes it questionable," the INQUIRER source said, referring to the alleged practice in the military of releasing funds for goods or services that were not delivered.

Rep. Prospero Pichay Jr. (Lakas, Surigao del Sur), chair of the House panel in the Commission on Appointments, said Cabinet officials and generals seeking CA confirmation of their appointments would need to undergo lifestyle checks.

Pichay warning

Pichay advised those linked to graft cases similar to Garcia's not to bother to submit their papers to the CA for confirmation of their appointments.

"The CA will reject their appointments outright and even file the appropriate cases for their investigation and prosecution by the House and other agencies concerned," he said.

He said lifestyle checks on Cabinet appointees and generals had become necessary in the face of allegations that some military officers had amassed wealth beyond their legal means.

Pichay said the probe of Garcia's supposedly unexplained wealth should "extend to the higher echelons of the military as there are other generals who likely benefited from the bribe and grease money he got from suppliers.

"The principle of command responsibility makes the superior officials of Garcia also accountable," he said.

"The investigation and lifestyle probe should be conducted [also] in the PNP, where a police general is reportedly under investigation by PNP-Internal Affairs and the Ombudsman for amassing millions of pesos in protection money from illegal gambling operators," he said.

Referring to officers being considered to replace AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Narciso Abaya, who is set to retire this year, Pichay said: "In the case of the personalities jockeying for the chief of staff position, we must determine if they have any participation at all in corruption.

"A dirty chief of staff will just help perpetuate the corruption prevalent in the military," the congressman said.

Golez committee

The aim of the House inquiry into Garcia's case is to help Congress craft remedial measures to address the problem of alleged large-scale graft and corruption in the Office of the Comptroller of the Armed Forces, as well as other graft-prone units in the defense-military establishment, Rep. Roilo Golez said in a statement.

Reform of the AFP is one of the top legislative agenda items before the House defense committe that Golez chairs.

Golez said the results of the inquiry would have a significant bearing on the budget of the AFP and support for its modernization program.

"Members of the House, and the public in general, are concerned that funds for the AFP might just be mismanaged and misappropriated through overprice, kickbacks and bribes, if remedial measures are not instituted," he said.

"Moreover, even military assistance from the United States may be jeopardized," Golez added.

Golez said developments in the Garcia case were being monitored by the US Congress, which will evaluate and approve military assistance to the AFP.

Who else got rich?

Golez said his committee would dig deeper into the case to find out "who else in the AFP-defense establishment may be involved."

This would include the suppliers and contractors reportedly mentioned by Garcia's wife in a communication to US authorities, he said.

"The world is watching how the AFP leadership and the government in general will address the serious graft and corruption and reform of the AFP," Golez said.

Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr., vice chair of the Senate national defense committee, disagreed that there was a need for Congress to step into the mess at this time.

He said Congress should leave the investigation to the Ombudsman's office.

"It would be better if Congress stays out of it," Magsaysay said in an interview. "It might complicate things."

He said that, maybe, Congress could "jump in later."

Magsaysay urged the AFP to coordinate with the Ombudsman's office in the probe of Garcia.

He said he talked to Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz and asked him to pursue the Garcia case with decisiveness.

"And he (Cruz) said he'll do his best," the senator said.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, chair of the Senate committee on national defense and security, also said his committee had no plans to embark on an investigation of Garcia, saying the House of Representatives was already set to conduct its own probe.

"Imagine two houses investigating one thing," Biazon said in a phone interview.

But the senator, who once served as the AFP chief of staff during the administration of Corazon Aquino, said he would be "watching and monitoring" the House investigation.

And it would only be then, he said, that he would decide whether or not there was a need for his committee to step in.

Still, Biazon said he intended to ask defense and military officials about the status of Garcia's case when they attend his committee's hearing today.

The national defense committee is to hear a Senate proposal for the creation of a national disaster management commission.

Biazon said he had invited Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz to attend the hearing.

The Office of Ombudsman has charged Garcia with dishonesty, gross misconduct and conduct prejudicial to the interest of the service over supposed discrepancies in his statement of assets, liabilities and networth.

Garcia has been placed under preventive suspension by the military. *With reports from Carlito Pablo, Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Christine O. Avendaño*

Colleagues in military tell Robles to shut up

From page A1

know their names." He said only the US authorities could identify these officials with alleged unexplained wealth and only after they were indicted.

Robles, one of a group of idealist officers implicated in a coup plot in 1986 against the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos, said corruption in the military was an old issue.

As a member of the fact-finding Feliciano Commission which looked into the root causes of last year's short-lived Oakwood mutiny, Robles and another commissioner, former Air Force Capt. Roland Narciso, submitted a "minority report" that tackled specific cases of corruption in the Armed Forces.

Fear of demoralization

"I gave the President a copy of the report, but nothing came of it. And now they are telling me to shut up," Robles said.

Malacañang yesterday expressed concern that failure to punish corrupt officials in the military or in the government could fuel restiveness among soldiers.

"We have to prosecute the officials involved because they would serve as bad examples and this could lead to demoralization," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said in an interview on radio dzBB.

"The President will not protect anyone, including any member of her Cabinet, but the important thing is fairness," Bunye said.

He appealed to those making the allegations to provide proof of their claims instead of making general accusations.

Lifestyle checks

"How can we have an investigation if there is no evidence?" Bunye asked.

The secretary earlier vowed there would be no whitewash in the investigation of General Garcia or any other official who failed the lifestyle check.

Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. has warned that a whitewash could spark a mutiny in the military similar to the Oakwood uprising by 300 soldiers, who denounced alleged widespread corruption in the Armed Forces. *With a report from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

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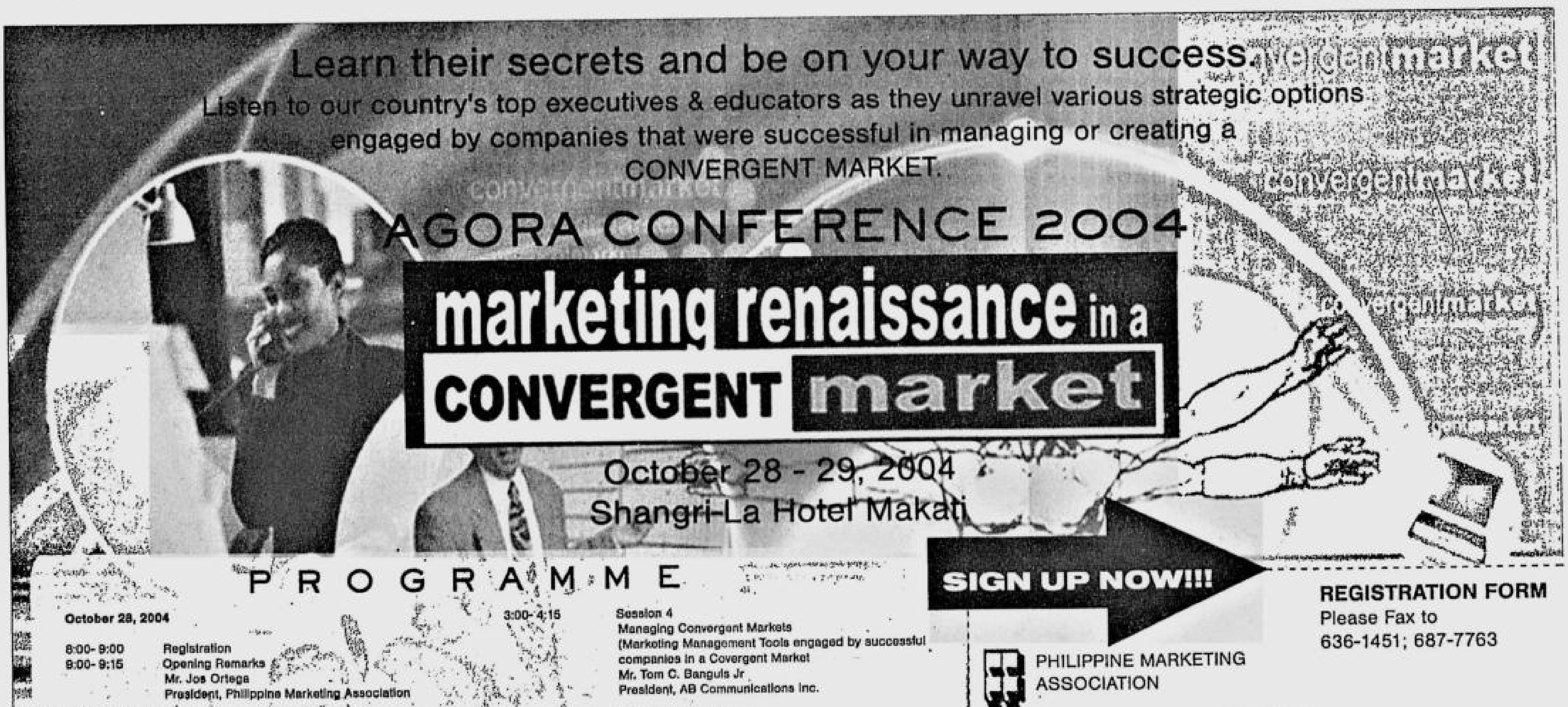

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October 28, 2004

8:00- 9:00 Registration
9:00- 9:15 Opening Remarks
Mr. Jos Ortega
President, Philippine Marketing Association

AM Sessions 9:15- 10:15 Module 1: Principles of Market Convergence
Session 1
Introduction to Market Convergence
(Principles and Components of Market Convergence)
Ms. Karen V. De Asis
Faculty and Marketing Director
DLSU Graduate School of Business

10:15- 11:30 Session 2
Market Convergence: Market Technology-Driven?
(Roots or Origins of Convergent Markets)
Mr. Ferdinand M. De La Cruz
Head, Wireless Business Group, GLOBE Telecom

11:30- 12:00 nn Synthesis/Open Forum
Dr. Leonardo R. Garcia, Jr.
Dean, Professional Continuing Education
DLSU, College of St. Benilde

12:00 nn- 1:00 pm LUNCH BREAK

PM Sessions 1:15- 2:30 Module 2: Managing in a Convergent Market
Session 3
Strategic Options in a Convergent Market
(Competing in a Convergent Market and the Financial Benefits of Succeeding in this Market)
Sec. Luis P. Lorenzo, Jr.
Presidential Adviser for Job Generation and Chairman of Land Bank and Quedancor

3:00- 4:15 Session 4
Managing Convergent Markets
(Marketing Management Tools engaged by successful companies in a Covergent Market
Mr. Tom C. Banguis Jr
President, AB Communications Inc.

4:15- 4:30 Synthesis/Open Forum
Ms. Luz T. Suplico
Assistant Professor, De La Salle University

October 29, 2004

AM Sessions 9:10- 10:15 Module 3: Preparing or Planning for a Convergent Market
Session 5
Convergent Market: Can Managers Anticipate?
(Predicting Industries That are Ripe for Convergence)
Mr. Bienvenido C. Niles, Jr.
President, AC Nielsen- Asia Pacific

10:15- 11:30 Session 6
Convergent Market: Can Managers Shape It?
(Influencing the shape and trend of Market Convergence)
Mr. Amable R. Aguiluz, V
President, AMA Education System

11:30- 11:45 Synthesis/Open Forum
Ms. Mylene Abiva-Sazon
Chief Executive Officer, Felta Multi-Media Inc.

11:45- 12:00 Closing/Raffle

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RP stock market: Asia's bright light or black hole?

From page A1

Japan's Nikkei 225 index has been struggling at around 1.5 percent.

In New York, the Dow Jones Industrial Average is down around 4 percent, while in London the FTSE-100 is up by just over 2.0 percent.

In recent weeks, the Philippine market has surged to highs not seen in more than four years, much of the rise being driven by inflows of foreign capital.

According to data from the Philippine Stock Exchange and estimates by ATR Kim Eng Securities, net foreign investment up to Oct. 7 was worth nearly P7 billion ($125 million).

And all this in a country facing a budget deficit amounting to P200 billion ($3.5 billion), an external debt running to $56 billion and half of its 84 million people living on less than P112 ($2) a day.

Poverty level

Poverty has reached such a level that the government recently announced it was considering giving out monthly food coupons worth P1,200 ($21.30) to some 5 million families nationwide. The cost of this food program alone is expected to reach P6 billion ($100 million) a month.

So what has changed?

According to Martin Enrile of ATR Kim Eng Securities, "in one word ... it's perception."

"Last year, no one cared about the Philippines, least of all fund managers. The perception outside was one of great uncertainty. The country was facing an election and a huge fiscal deficit," Enrile said.

"We have had the election and President Gloria Arroyo is back in her own right. She has laid out her vision for the future while at the same time admitting there are problems.

"This honesty I think has given comfort to investors, especially those foreign fund managers who stayed away. Another factor has been the surprisingly good corporate earnings so far this year."

But Enrile did voice a note of caution: "Unless the government can deliver on its promises the foreign funds will go."

Seize opportunity

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) said recently the Arroyo administration with its new mandate had a "unique opening to break from the past by addressing longstanding economic weaknesses and boldly pursuing a vigorous far-reaching agenda of economic reforms.

"Seizing the opportunity will be crucial for addressing the Philippine economy's vulnerabilities to external shocks while helping to underpin investor confidence and improve debt dynamics," the IMF said.

"This will lay the basis for stronger and more sustained economic growth and job creation and contribute to significant poverty reduction over the medium term."

Tax measures

This was echoed by ratings agency Standard and Poor's, which warned last week that the Arroyo administration's failure to pass key tax measures in the next three months would be crucial.

S&P noted that Ms Arroyo admitted in August that the country was in a fiscal crisis and her administration's difficulty in cutting costs and getting Congress to pass eight key revenue measures to keep the deficit in check.

Despite Ms Arroyo's efforts amid a growing concern over the issue, the passage of these remedial measures has been "slow," or even blocked by political pressures and congressional squabbling, S&P said.

This could be taken as a signal that "the political class is unwilling to swallow the bitter medicine" and that despite her victory in the presidential elections in May, Ms Arroyo and her allies in Congress still could not carry out reforms, SP warned.

"The administration has said all the right things ... it has sent out all the right signals," ATR Kim Eng's Enrile said. "The hard part will be the delivery."

AFP

Casino money OK, but not 'jueteng,' says bishop

CAPALLA

From page A1

This much Davao Archbishop Fernando Capalla admitted as he revealed that clergymen could be benefiting from gambling, which the Church preaches and campaigns against.

Capalla, president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, said some priests, and even bishops like himself, had sent needy people for financial assistance to the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp., which oversees legalized gambling in the country, including casino operations.

Acceptable practice

This was acceptable practice he said, because most of Pagcor's beneficiaries were the same poor families being served by the Church.

In this aspect, "bishops just [serve as] a conduit to Pagcor," Capalla told reporters in an interview at the CBCP office on Friday.

Pangasinan Archbishop Oscar Cruz, former CBCP president, earlier slammed Pagcor as a perpetrator of Philippine society's moral deterioration.

Church coffers

Capalla clarified: "We're not saying it's OK to gamble; we're just saying that at this point, only the government can help."

Apart from the aid that Pagcor extends to people that the priests send over, Capalla said, gambling money also makes its way to the Church coffers via donations. "What can you do [if] it's offered by the people? Some do it to pay for their sins."

Priests don't ask questions about such donations, he said. "I don't know whether it is appropriate [to ask]. And if some bishops are doing something [else with the donations], well, they are left to their own conscience."

But he was "glad" that Cruz had spoken up, Capalla said. He reiterated the CBCP's support for the Pangasinan prelate's vigorous antigambling crusade.

Last week, Cruz claimed that four high public officials were receiving some P6 million a month in jueteng payola. The government has dared him to name names.

Sin, not sinner

"I'm happy he (Cruz) did not," Capalla maintained. "As spiritual leaders, we condemn the sin not the sinner. We don't expose people to ridicule."

Besides, he said, if the government really wanted to find out, it should use its intelligence agencies and not force Cruz to "break confidences."

According to Capalla, the Church condemns jueteng primarily because it victimizes the poor who don't have enough to feed their families, to begin with. For these people, he insisted, gambling was "a form of survival."

On the other hand, he said, "only those who can afford to play in the first place go to casinos. Most of them are not even Filipinos; they're from Taiwan and Singapore."

He also admitted that "in some places," the Church had failed to make the victimized faithful understand that gambling was addictive.

Capalla pointed out: "During times of crisis, I've noticed two places that people frequent more—churches and lotto stations. It is clear that [gambling] is giving false incentives." Unfortunately, he said, "we have failed to develop in people a consistent conscience that they can stick to."

Food coupons could hardly alleviate poverty

From page A1

in September 2003, according to the survey.

And to think that Mindanao is a rich agricultural region, where tilling land can be a fallback for the poor. In Metro Manila, the incidence of households that went without food at least once in the three months before the survey increased to 15.7 percent, more than double the 7.3 percent almost a year ago.

Emergency

It is no solace that the 15.1-percent incidence of hunger nationwide did not breach the record 16.1 percent set in March 2001. Of the 15.1 percent of about 15.3 million households, 11.8 percent experienced hunger once or a few times (described as moderate hunger) while 3.3 percent experienced it often or always (severe hunger), according to SWS.

We don't see in these figures the likes of the famine that blights the wretched poor in equatorial Africa, but they are enough to jolt the administration into taking immediate measures to relieve hunger and to respond to it as an emergency. Here, I am avoiding the overused word "crisis."

While we recognize that poverty has been an endemic social issue that requires long-term measures for its alleviation, missing meals, even only occasionally, is an acute situation fraught with implications for political stability, social unrest and the viability of an administration.

Inflation has something to do with the inability of households to eat three meals a day. It rose sharply in August, rising to its highest level in 34 months at an annualized 6.6 percent, according to data from the National Statistics Office. The rise was reflected in the SWS survey of hunger incidence at about the same time.

Minimum wage

The NSO reported a 10.8-percent rise in the cost of services in August. But minimum wage remained static, and for a household to catch up with the increase in the cost of living, it has to earn 7 percent more.

There was a confluence of costs that fueled inflation. Cooking gas increased to an average of P360.20 per 11-kg cylinder from P276 last year.

This year, Meralco raised its rates twice for a total increase of 30.64 centavos per kilowatt-hour. The Light Rail Transit Authority in Metro Manila, raised fares, while rising diesel prices pushed the minimum jeepney fare to P5.50 from P4.

The rise in gasoline prices was blamed for the higher transport cost and power rates. There is a tendency to look for a political explanation for the jump in the prices of goods and services, with some blaming the heavy election spending for fueling inflation.

Stop-gap measure

One cannot make a case with this political argument, which is a cheap shot. It can only be part of the explanation that includes the inability of the administration to exercise its supervisory powers and responsibility to put a lid on the costs of utilities—a very important component of the cost of living.

The hunger statistics jolted the administration into taking measures that have little to do with poverty alleviation. The administration right away responded with plans to issue food coupons to the "poorest" families in the country, a stop-gap response.

The coupons will, of course, enable acutely distressed families to procure food on public subsidy, to stave off hunger momentarily.

An estimated 5 million families may receive the coupons. This response is typical of the social welfare department's relief for national emergencies due to calamities, such as flooding, typhoons, fires and volcanic eruptions. Except that the scale of the relief is larger and that coupons could hardly alleviate poverty.

Losing control

Food relief does not create jobs. The creation of one million jobs a year is one of the key elements of the President's 10-point agenda. But before Ms Arroyo can even show that her economic program has created some jobs, the administration is already being set back by a national emergency.

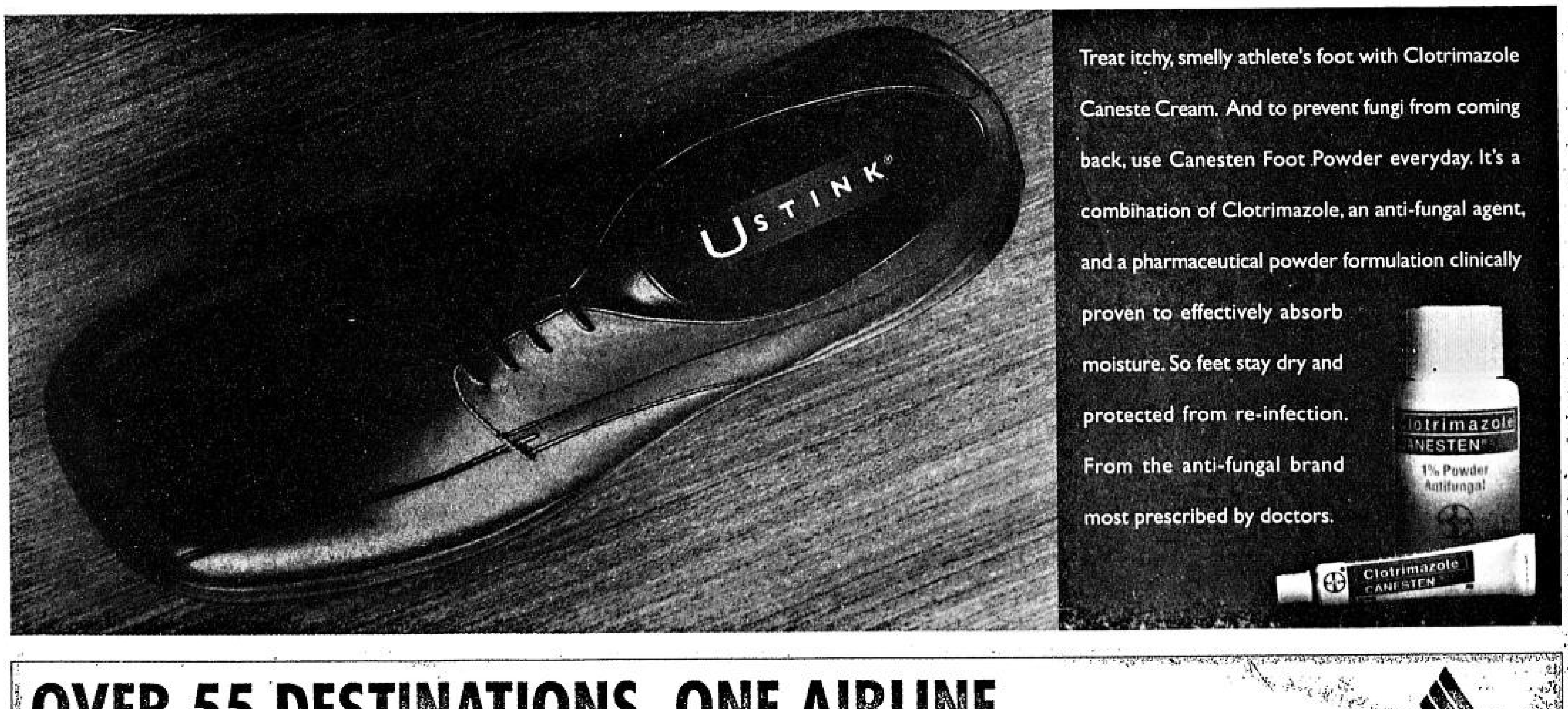
Since July 1, the administration has been jumping from one economic and social shock to the next, rather than setting a momentum. It is being swiftly overtaken by events that can get out of hand. It is losing control.

The administration's eight tax reform measures—key elements of the package to reduce the fiscal deficit—are stuck in Congress. Although the President's party coalition has majority control of Congress, this is wasted and she is unable to use it to speed the passage of tax reforms.

The Standard & Poor's Ratings Services has warned the country of another credit downgrade because of "a continued inability to effect fundamental changes."

The rating service points out that of the eight revenue measures needed for fiscal adjustment, the initial hopes of passing four of the eight before the end of the year have "withered away" with Congress in recess until November.

It warned that failure to pass the measures might mean the entire tax reform initiative losing momentum and getting bogged down in endless negotiations in Congress.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LTFRB to charge ₱30,000 for FX franchise shift

By Clarissa S. Batino

GETTING out of limbo will cost owners of Asian utility vehicles (AUVs) operating as public transportation.

Maria Elena Bautista, chair of the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB), said the agency would be allowing the conversion of a public utility vehicle (PUV) franchise to an AUV Express franchise in exchange for P30,000.

PUV franchises include garage service and other specialized public ferry services.

Operating as jeepneys

An AUV Express franchise, on the other hand, is one that would allow AUVs to operate as air-conditioned jeepneys that charge per head.

AUVs include Toyota Tamaraw FXs, Isuzu Hi-Landers, Toyota Revos and Mitsubishi Adventures. These are 11-seater, air-conditioned vehicles that are currently seen ferrying passengers along various routes in Metro Manila.

Bautista said many of these PUVs were already operating as AUV Express units while waiting for their franchise.

She said the conversion fee would be in lieu of the stiff penalty that the government could slap on PUV owners that have been operating outside the provisions of their franchise.

"We are actually offering an amnesty to those who have been operating outside their franchise for years," the LTFRB chair pointed out.

Bautista added, "Based on the law, we could impose a penalty of P200 a day. These FX [owners] admitted they have been violating [the provisions] since 1998."

P450,000 penalty

She said that should the agency apply the full penalty, it could mean a fine of about P450,000 for each PUV operator.

There are 9,044 applications currently in limbo that could be converted to AUV Express franchises once the transportation department issues an order allowing them to do so.

Bautista said the agency could collect about P27 million in additional revenue from the conversion fee. This would be much lower compared to more than P4 billion the government could generate if it applied the full penalty.

The LTFRB collected P350 million from fees and charges last year. She said as of September, the agency was 45 percent ahead of its nine-month revenue target.

"The order for the AUV Express is for the signature of the secretary. It could come out very soon," Bautista said.

She then explained, "This order would legalize the operation of the FXs that line up in terminals and charge per head."

No to mega taxis

The LTFRB chief pointed out that the 5,766 mega taxis currently operating would not be allowed to convert their franchise to AUV Express.

Mega taxi operators would have to give up their franchise and apply for one for AUV Express.

However, Bautista said these might not be granted immediately since there were already 9,044 franchises waiting for potential conversion.

In the meantime, she said mega taxis should use their meters, limit their passengers to five and remove the seats at the back to give way to cargo starting Sept. 16.

Otherwise, she said, they would be classified as 'colorum,' fined and penalized.

500 colorum PUVs nabbed

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority (MMDA) has intensified its drive against 'colorum' or illegally operating public utility vehicles (PUVs) plying Edsa to "ensure the effectiveness" of the agency's traffic projects.

MMDA General Manager Robert Nacianceno said the agency impounded 500 colorum PUVs from Sept. 15 to Oct. 7, 2004.

Nacianceno said 400 of the apprehended vehicles were passenger buses while the rest were FX mega taxis and private vans illegally conveying commuters.

He said the agency put up five checkpoints on Edsa for the apprehension of colorum vehicles.

These checkpoints are supervised by traffic policemen with the rank of superintendent to ensure that errors are avoided during apprehension, Nacianceno said.

The MMDA official explained, "It is only logical to rid Edsa of these colorum vehicles in order to make our traffic projects, like the Organized Bus Route and bus terminals, work and function efficiently."

Watchman dies fighting rob suspects

By Tarra V. Quismundo

A SECURITY guard died on Saturday while defending his post from what police believed was a notorious robbery and kidnap-for-ransom gang.

Avelino Bello, 29, a resident of Western Bicutan, Taguig, was killed as he attempted to prevent attacking armed robbers from entering the store he was guarding.

PO2 Alexander de la Cruz, investigator from the Western Police District Station 10, said that five men on board two cars arrived at JS Rice Marketing on Otis Street, Paco, Manila at about 7:40 p.m.

Police said Bello got hold of his shotgun but the suspects shot at him first.

The watchman was hit in the head by a bullet, causing him to die on the spot.

Investigators gathered that the gravely wounded Bello was able to fire his shotgun as he fell down.

He, however, failed to hit any of the suspects.

Guard shot again

As Bello laid bloodied on the pavement, the robbers, armed with handguns and rifles, shot him again several times in the face in an apparent move to make sure that he would no longer be able to put up a fight.

The men then went inside the store. Fortunately, cashiers had already locked the cash registers in the office.

They also refused to open up despite threats of robbers to blow up the store with an improvised bomb: a bottle of gin filled with gasoline.

De la Cruz said the robbers left empty-handed after the roughly two-minute operation.

They apparently sensed that policemen were on their way.

Bystanders who saw Bello's shooting had reported the incident to the police.

De la Cruz added that the gang might have also planned to kidnap the store owner.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, October 11, 2004
28th Week in Ordinary Time
1st Reading: Gal 4:22-24, 26-27, 31-5:1
Gospel: Lk 11:29-32

As the crowd increased, Jesus began to speak in this way, "People of the present time are evil people. They ask for a sign, but no sign will be given to them except the sign of Jonah. As Jonah became a sign for the people of Nineveh, so will the Son of Man be a sign for this generation. The Queen of the South will rise up on Judgment Day with the people of these times and accuse them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and here there is greater than Solomon. The people of Nineveh will rise up on Judgment Day with the people of these times and accuse them, for Jonah's preaching made them turn from their sins, and here there is greater than Jonah."

Commentary

"If only God would give me some clear sign!" said Woody Allen, "like making a large deposit in my name at a Swiss bank." The author of the Book of Jonah might have used that one, had there been Swiss banks then. It's the funniest book in the Bible. The "sign of Jonah," as interpreted by Matthew's gospel (12:40), is his spending three days and nights in a whale's belly and then being regurgitated on the shore, but not before he had composed a lengthy prayer to God from his very unusual location-some of it quite remote from his predicament, "Those who serve worthless idols forfeit the grace that was theirs..." But Luke's gospel avoids this droll image altogether. For Luke the sign of Jonah to the Ninevites is his preaching.

The basic and more usual meaning of sign in the Scriptures is: something that indicates the existence or the presence of what it signifies; it points beyond itself to something present. Only rarely does "sign" mean an omen or portent: these would refer to future events, but a sign is about the present.

The best sign would not draw attention to itself, but to what it signifies. The simpler and the less distracting it is, the better. The whale's belly hardly bears thinking about, and for that very reason it holds our attention (disgusting things do). But the preaching of Jesus is clear and unambiguous and it points our attention directly to God.

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3 men nabbed for wanting to fly kites

By Tarra V. Quismundo

CREATIVITY can get one arrested.

Three members of the labor group Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) were arrested yesterday in Manila after they tried to raise awareness for higher wages by flying kites at the Quirino Grandstand.

Edison Malanog, 36; Jose Nefiel, 36, and Joey Eduarte, 33, all Quezon City residents, were arrested at about 9:30 a.m. while preparing to fly kites bearing their call for a P125 across-the-board wage increase.

Western Police District (WPD) officers said the three KMU members did not have a permit for the activity.

The three men said they were supposed to hold a symbolic kite-flying at the national park.

Nine KMU members were at the park and were expecting more to arrive when the arrest was made.

The kite-flying demonstration coincided with a thanksgiving celebration of television network GMA-7 at the grandstand.

"We had no intention to hold a rally. We just wanted to fly kites," said Nefiel, while he and the two other suspects underwent investigation at the WPD General Assignments Section.

WPD Station 5 policemen said they arrested the KMU members because these did not have a permit to hold their activity at the park.

Police confiscated banners, streamers and kites.

"I was even with my family," said Nefiel in Filipino. "The national park is supposed to be for everybody, whoever you are, you could go there."

The three suspects face charges of breach of peace, a violation of a city ordinance, and littering, an offense against a presidential decree.

PO2 Alberto Saygo Jr., case investigator, said they would verify with Manila's Bureau of Permits whether the men had any permit to hold their activity.

Should it be determined that they indeed did not have a permit, the three men would be charged with illegal assembly.

The city implements a strict no permit, no rally policy.

Tire blast kills 1

By Edson Tandoc Jr.

A 20-YEAR-OLD welder was killed after a bus tire exploded in his face Saturday in Quezon City.

Killed was Noe de Guzman, an employee of Victory Liner bus company.

His fellow employee Salvador Buendia sustained injuries, police said.

Investigator PO3 Juan Mortel said that at about 4 p.m. the other day, Buendia removed a tire with a defective rim from one of their buses in the company terminal on Baler Street, Barangay Paltok.

He then asked De Guzman to fix the tire's rim.

But when De Guzman was starting to weld the rim, the tire, which was still filled with air, suddenly exploded in front of his face.

The impact caused serious injuries in his face and head, killing him instantly, Mortel said.

Buendia, who was nearby, sustained minor injuries in his body.

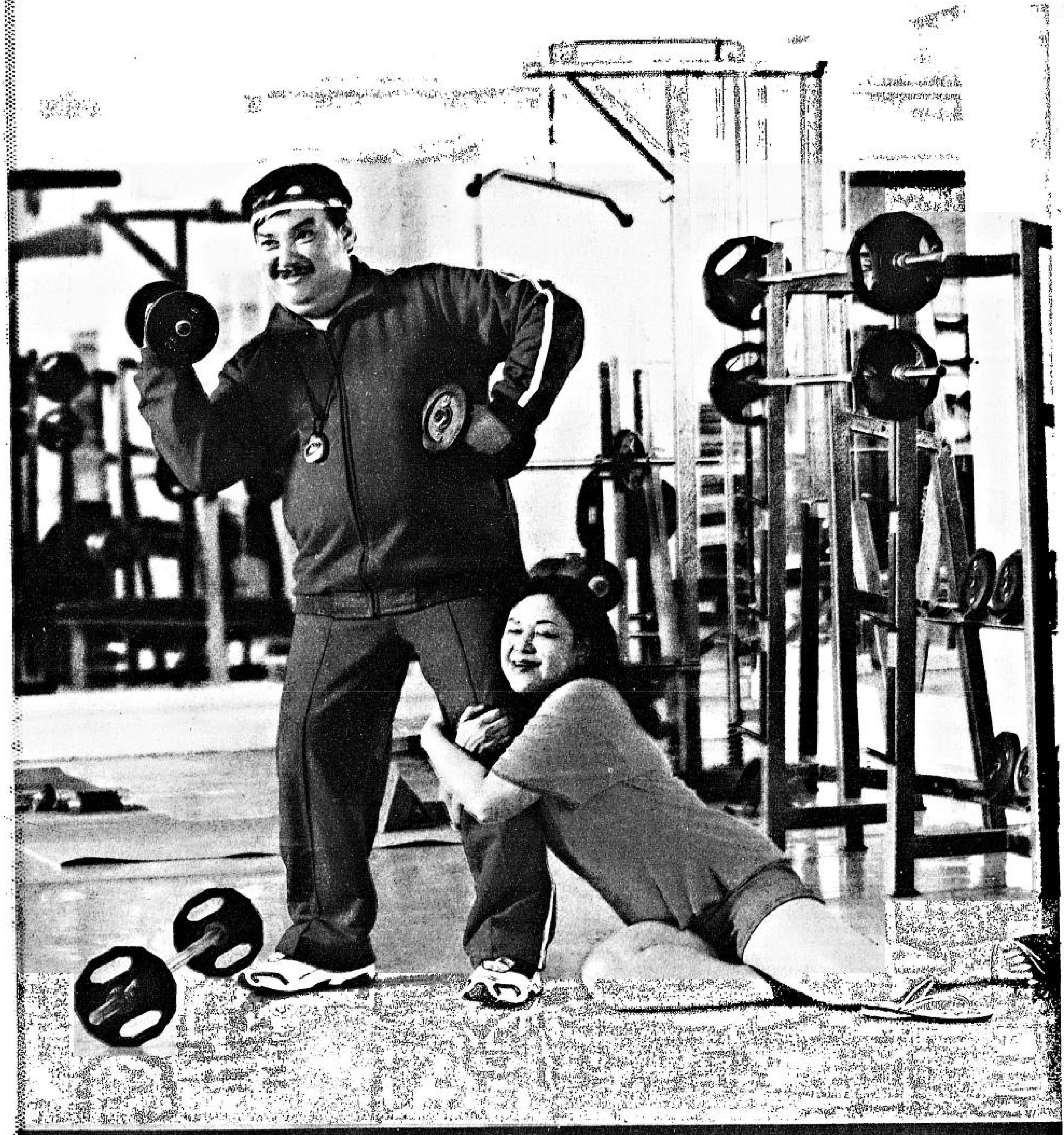
However, the blast may have damaged his hearing, Mortel added.

Buendia is still being treated at the East Avenue Medical Center.

Polite crooks strike

TWO MEN appeared at the front door of former police Supt. Romulo de la Cruz's home at the corner of SS Loyola and Matimyas Streets, Manila, yesterday morning and greeted him "Good morning" and "How are you?"

Then the two pulled out guns before proceeding to rob the retired policeman of P100,000 in cash and valuables. *Tarra V. Quismundo*



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WNBA Finals Game 2; 2:30 p.m.; ESPN - Will it be the coronation night for one team or will the other squad extend the series?

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Compiled by L. Mangulat

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Barangay Ginebra bounces back

Castillo, new team leader, steps up as Hotdogs defang Tigers

KERBY Raymundo of Purefoods attempts a reverse shot under pressure from Rudy Hatfield of Coca-Cola during third-quarter action of the two teams' game last night. The shot rimmed out. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

By Musong R. Castillo

A BARANGAY Ginebra side slowly rounding out to peak form tripped Sta. Lucia, 88-84, last night for its first victory in the Gran Matador PBA Philippine Cup.

The Kings' starting backcourt scored all but 30 of the team's output with JayJay Helterbrand scattering 23 and Rodney Santos contributing 22.

With Mark Caguioa chipping in 13, not much was required from Eric Menk offensively. The Ginebra cornerstone collected a night-high 16 rebounds, though.

It was a shot in the arm for the Kings, who got beaten black-and-blue, 87-104 last week by Purefoods, which jumped to a share of the early lead earlier with a 78-76 decision of Coca-Cola.

"We were off in the first game. I am not offering excuses, but we just came into the tournament half-prepared," said Ginebra's Siot Tanquingcen. "There were a lot of injuries during the off-season and we never were really able to prepare."

Ginebra actually blew several double-digit spreads in the first half and even trailed in the third before Helterbrand and Santos hit timely baskets that doomed the Realtors to a second straight loss.

Flaunting the same look but playing with a winning attitude, Purefoods won consecutive games for the first time in close to a year.

Noy Castillo scored the team's final four points and snared the game's most important rebound as the Hotdogs jumped off to their best conference start in two seasons.

"We just got tired of losing. We've been losing heavily," said coach Ryan Gregorio.

CASTILLO/A26

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Fedex	1	0
San Miguel	1	1
Red Bull	0	1
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Shell	0	1
Ginebra	1	1
Sta. Lucia	0	2

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September 28 Draw
Rosalie Olabiaga
Naga City, Bicol

September 29 Draw
Ar-gie Benito
Urdaneta, Pangasinan

2nd Week Winners:

September 30 Draw
Diosdado Paglalunan
Gen. Tinio St., Gapan City

October 1 Draw
Momie Fetalvero
Valenzuela, Metro Manila

October 2 Draw
Gweneth Remigio
Novaliches, Q.C.

October 3 Draw
Ralff Joseph Miranda
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Taguig five a win from NBC North title series

FORWARD Taguig drew first blood in the NBC (National Basketball Conference) North division semifinal series Saturday by turnng back the Batangas 29ers, 77-70, at the CP Tinga gym in Taguig.

Veteran point guard Ogie Gumatay scored 13 of his game-high 17 points in the fourth quarter to move Mayor Freddie Tinga's Taguig cagers within a win of a finals seat in the tournament sponsored by Panasonic, Spring Cooking Oil, PCSO, Nature's Spring Mineral Water, Sulpicio Lines, Cebu Ferries, Air Philippines, Supercat, Skygo Motorycles, Trans-Asia, Accel and Molten.

The 29ers of Malvar Mayor Tita Reyes, Rep. Oscar Gozos and businessman Bernie Maranan erected the game's biggest lead at 70-61 in the third, but Taguig used a full-court trap at the start of the fourth to turn the game around.

Gumatay and slotman Bernard de Guia combined for 17 of Taguig's last 28 points while limiting the 29ers to 15 in the final canto of the match which was marked by 11 ties and eight lead changes.

The 29ers' All-Star MVP, Sonny Manucat, got into foul trouble early and was held down to 11 points by Taguig's tight defense.

Taguig tries to wrap up the series at 6 p.m. today. And so does Ozamiz, which seeks its second straight win over Iloilo also at 6 p.m. today at the Gov. Medina gym in Ozamiz City.

The scores:

TAGUIG 77—Gumatay 17, De Guia 13, Robillos 11, Roldan 10, Ricafuente 8, Reyes 7, Villar 6, Cruz 3, Alberto 2, Quimpo 0, Magsalin 0.

BATANGAS 70—Manucat 11, De Castro 11, Mallari 11, Finuliar 8, Saygo 8, Neo 7, Valena 4, Sta. Cruz 4, Rodriguez 3, Gonzales 2, Agleron 1, Cuevas 0.

Quarters: 16-19, 34-31, 49-55, 77-70

THE PHILIPPINES' Maritess Bitbit shows the way for Japan's Rie Katayama (partly hidden) and the rest of the field in the first lap of the women's cross-country race. Bitbit later took a spill and hit a tree, forcing her to retire. JESS YUSON

Japan sweeps 3 CC events; Surban 2nd

By June M. Navarro

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—Japan swept the last three events of the 10th Asian Mountain Bike championship yesterday even as Nino Surban salvaged a silver medal for the Filipinos at the close of the two-day international event in sitio Magarwak in Barangay Lourdes here.

With superior skills and equipment, the Japanese finished with five golds out of six disputed by dominating the cross-country competitions through Kenji Takeya in the men's races, Rie Katayama in the women's class and Ken Onodera in the boys' division.

Surban's silver in the boys' division actually prevented a third 1-2 finish for the day by the Japanese, who had dominated the men's and women's downhill events also in 1-2 fashions Saturday.

Hong Kong's Ka Ho Liu broke through the Japanese juggernaut by ruling the boys' downhill on the first day.

Surban, a 16-year-old sophomore at Danao High School in Cebu, finished four minutes and 57 seconds behind Onodera, who won in 1:45:53. Stanley Jalip Jr. of Malaysia took the bronze in 1:53:30.

"I did everything possible to give the country a medal," said Surban in Filipino. Among others, he dedicated the only medal by the 11-man RP team to his late father, who died last February, and his girlfriend, Sandra Sandro.

Onodera cut loose after one and a half laps of the five-lap, 5.7-kilometer circuit, leaving Surban and Jalip to dispute the silver in the event organized by Philcycling and sponsored by Air21, Kontrol Sunglasses, Philippine Airlines, Cargohaus, Dos-1, E-Konek, Mail&More, Agua de Laguna and the local government of Puerto Princesa City.

The three stars of the national team all failed to finish, with Marites Bitbit injuring her hips after hitting a tree as she took a spill while leading the women's cross-country race.

Eusebio Quiñones, the 2003 SEA Games cross-country gold medalist, and veteran Frederick Feliciano quit due to mechanical troubles midway through the six-lap, 5.7-km men's race.

"*Kayang-kaya sana* (I could have won)," said a teary-eyed Bitbit, who was ahead of Katayama by 40 seconds when she took a spill on a downhill stretch.

Katayama captured the gold in two hours, 13 minutes and 28 seconds over teammate Izumi Takahashi, who clocked 2:19:51. Pornbanchoekul Chindarat of Thailand took the bronze (2:26:21).

Takeya won the men's cross-country in 2:02:48, with Takanori Yamaguchi (2:04:22) getting the silver. Thailand's Masae Tawatchai (2:05:27) secured the bronze.

Barangay Ginebra bounces back

From page A25

"This is a big tournament for us that is why we are coming out thinking that we could win games."

Castillo finished with 17 points living up to the role of team leader assigned to him by Gregorio before the start of the year.

The Tigers dropped into a tie with idle San Miguel at 1-1.

The Tigers actually led, 76-74, after a Poch Juinio layup but they couldn't exploit two crucial possessions which Jun Limpot threw away.

Purefoods then regained the lead on a 2-on-1 break which Castillo finished off, 77-76, with 24.8 left.

The scores:

First Game

PUREFOODS 78—Raymundo 22, Castillo 17, Limpot 15, Artadi 7, Yee 6, Yap 5, Hrabak 4, Simon 2, Realubit 0, Patrimonio 0, Demapo 0.

COCA-COLA 76—Hatfield 17, Abarrientos 16, Reavis 10, David 9, Juinio 9, Hugnatan 6, Wainwright 4, Carlaso 3, Morano 2, Lao 0, Antonio 0.

Quarters: 23-20; 36-44; 62-58; 78-76

Second Game

GINEBRA 88—Helterbrand 23, Santos 22, Caguioa 13, Adducul 10, Dimaunahan 8, Menk 6, Salvacion 3, Calpito 3, Noble 0.

STA. LUCIA 84—Espino 22, Duremdes 15, Mendoza 13, Francisco 12, Omolon 8, Gonzales 6, Aquino 5, Santos 3, Cuan 0, Ong 0.

Quarters: 31-15; 46-42; 69-65; 88-84

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Pacquiao caught in an emergency

BARE EYE

Recab Trinidad

MANNY Pacquiao's scheduled fight against a colored opponent from out of nowhere comes in with sirens wailing, colored warning lights flashing.

The fight, both desperate and frantic, is an emergency.

It's being delivered on board a screaming ambulance.

Given enough time to find a worthier foe, Pacquiao should rightfully fight an opponent with credentials suiting the stature of the Pinoy world boxing celebrity.

Pacquiao, highly respected all over the world, had reason to feel insulted.

But, time is running out.

Shamed out of the stellar rich bouts in the USA, no thanks to his glib US promoter, Murad Muhammad, Pacquiao needs one tune-up match before the year ends.

Otherwise, he would be rendered rusty, loose and soft for his scheduled big outings next year, topped by the return match against double world champion Juan Manuel Marquez.

***

So it will be Gail St. Gary.

You can bet Pacquiao himself had never before heard of this boxer, described as a tough one from Guyana.

St. Gary is being peddled as a survivor who holds the unenviable record of having lost (merely) on points against name boxers, like Diego Corrales and Leonard Dorin.

This simply means Pacquiao has nothing to gain from his scheduled fight, except hopefully a good, full-blown workout.

In fact, Freddie Roach took a sharp dig at promoter Murad when the famous American trainer wondered why a hot, top-rated boxer like Pacquiao could not get a good fight.

Well, the best that Pacquiao could aim for against the survivor from Guyana is to stop him cold.

For lack of someone better to showcase his great talent, Pacquiao and his home fans should be happy enough with the sinking of an unsinkable foe.

***

If there's anybody who should truly profit from the St. Gary fight, it's not Pacquiao but promoter Murad.

Murad may yet save his contract with Pacquiao, due to expire in February, if the emergency fight pushes through.

Then there is the local group that's assembling the fight here.

A full-blast publicity offensive last week announced blithely the bout was a "done deal."

Named as venue was the Global City in Taguig.

Taguig Mayor Freddie Tinga was supposed to have vowed his full support for the promotion.

Anyway, publicists have vowed to name the big people behind the fight this week.

Why they had refused to be identified at the time of the fight announcement simply makes the event both suspenseful and mysterious.

***

But listen now. The bigger question now is how to sanely finance the gigantic card.

With his iconic worth, Pacquiao, the press release announced, has been assured of a $500,000 purse.

That whopping sum, translated into pesos, would itself need an emergency in order to raise.

Then, counting other necessary expenses, it would not be silly to estimate total expenditures at over P70 million.

A plain accounting of possible revenues would show that promoters would need to call in someone with the godly touch of King Midas to help assemble the Pacquiao fight in Manila.

The main area of revenue, of course, is television.

But great as Pacquiao is, it's hard to imagine how to raise his purse alone from television advertising revenues.

Considering the hard times and the late timing, promoters would be extremely lucky to assemble commercials totaling P20 million.

***

So whom are they turning to for funding of the very expensive boxing show?

He may not have heard of St. Gary himself but, sad to say, it was the name of First Gentleman Mike Arroyo that was freely floated when the question of funding was raised.

Credit this to Mr. Arroyo's tested generosity, mainly when it comes to sporting matters.

Well, Murad Muhammad and his local counterparts may have other moneyed backers behind them.

But if ever Malacañang steps in to help, it could also be out of necessity.

In these hard times, an extravaganza, a circus in the magnitude of a Pacquiao fight close to Christmas, should help momentarily take the minds of the countless poor and hungry from their mounting miseries.

Like it or not, the Pacquiao fight should count as a Palace shot at the empty Pinoy breadbasket.

***

(UPDATE: A little correction, please. I typed 15 percent, not (only) 5 percent as inadvertently printed in my last column that partly dealt on the growing percentage of the very hungry among our citizenry. A check with the rundown laptop bore me out: there's, indeed, a sickening soar in the number of the foodless in the country... Jazz specialist Richard Merk is sponsoring "Kita kits tayo para kay Kits-a song for Paquito Diaz" at Merks Bar Bistro, Monday, Nov. 8, Greenbelt (Makati) Level 3. Diaz, an actor and friend to many, suffered a stroke and has been confined at the Medical City (ICU). Call Merks 7574720 for reservations.)

Big Bohol card stars WBO champ

TAGBILARAN CITY—World Boxing Organization Asia Pacific bantamweight champion Rey "Boom Boom" Bautista of ALA Stable will take on Indon Lontar Simanjuntak on Oct. 24 in the biggest boxing event in the province set at the Bohol Wisdom School Gym here.

Tagbilaran City Mayor Dan Neri Lim announced yesterday that the city is ready to host the mammoth event dubbed Pride of Bohol. "This is just the beginning, there will be a series of promotions after this," he added.

It will be Bautista's first outing since winning the WBO belt with an impressive second-round technical knockout win over Thai Saensak Singmanassak.

Promoter Sammy "Don King" Gello-an told a press conference held at the sprawling Island City Mall here that fans will get their money's worth.

ALA Boy Ceasar Amonsot, a native of Tagbilaran, battles Indon veteran Leed Sabu in the other featured bout.

Both Bautista and Amonsot are undefeated prospects from Bohol now based in Cebu.

The rest of the card pits Along Denoy versus Jhay Herla; Melvin Ayudtud against Johnny Lear; Rico Genon versus Danny Boy Bontilao; Noy Agcopra versus Jerry Manganip; Isidro Balabat versus Robert Allanic; Villy Bullecer against Noriharu Iwatani of Japan, and Park Cheon Su of Korea against Markyll Taroja.

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READY TO GO—Sen. Mar Roxas flashes the thumbs-up sign before the start of the recent Celebrity Karting Challenge at the Speedzone in The Fort in Taguig. More than 50 celebrities participated in the race. Roxas' teammates in the Men's Relay Challenge were Richard Gomez, Anjo Yllana and Bobby Andrews.

Patakbong Pinoy backs festival

THE PATAKBONG Pinoy will help bring out the rich tourism potential of Negros Oriental when it holds its Dumaguete City leg on Oct. 17.

The Media Runners and Sports Promotions event goes to the Visayas region for the first time after holding several races in Luzon.

Students from Negros Oriental High School and Silliman High comprise the bulk of the field vying in the race.

The Buglasan Festival is a province-wide activity set Oct. 15 to 24. Buglasan is derived from the word "Buglas," the original name of Negros Oriental.

Festivities include parades, fireworks displays and contests.

New program to improve power, skills

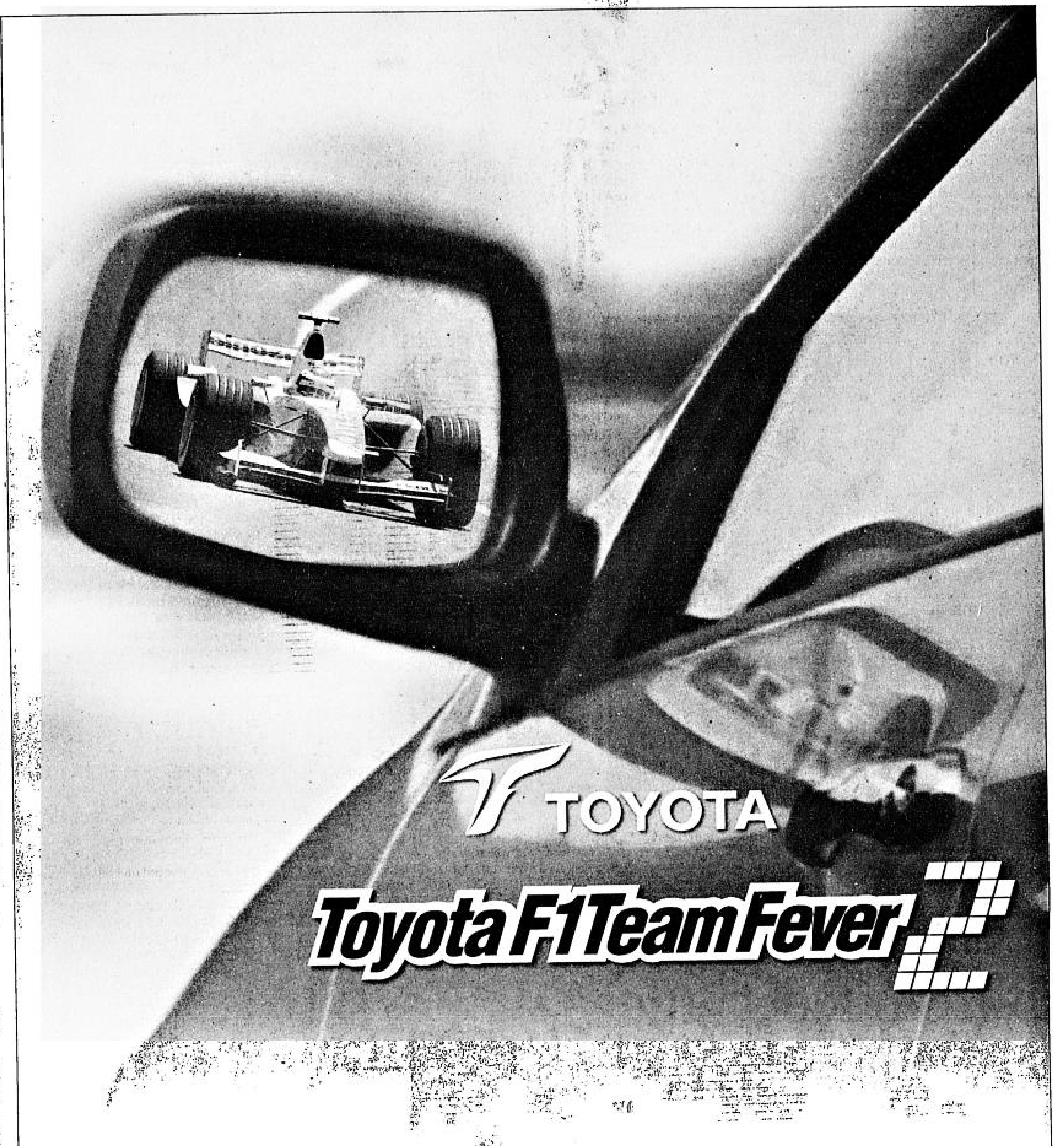
A WORLD-RENOWNED acceleration training, designed to help improve an individual's physical skills in virtually all sports, is now in the country.

Athletes who undergo Plyo Sports' Frappier Acceleration Sports Training (FAST) program will gain improved physical skills, such as speed, power, agility, flexibility and strength.

"Through the use of patented equipment and systematic training in six to 12 weeks, an athlete can expect gains, which translate into an improvement in his/her game," said Raul Banzon, head trainer and owner of the first Plyo Sports training facility at the adidas Sports Kamp in E-Square Park, Bonifacio Global City.

Developed by exercise physiologist John Frappier, the FAST program is designed to improve speed, agility and overall performance.

Through an international licensing system, Plyo Sports was given a certificate to administer the FAST program in the Philippines.



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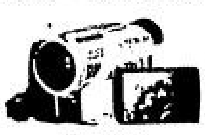
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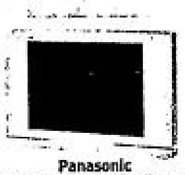
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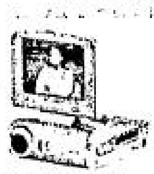
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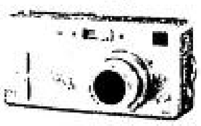
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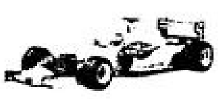
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BRING ON THE RED SOX

Yankees finish off Twins

MINNEAPOLIS—A big home run by Ruben Sierra, a clutch 11th-inning hit by Alex Rodriguez and the New York Yankees are headed right back where most people figured—playing the Boston Red Sox for the American League pennant.

"This is what everybody drew up in spring training and now everybody gets to see what it's all about," Yankees star Gary Sheffield said. "When Schilling went to the Red Sox and when A-Rod came here, that's what everybody wanted to see."

Sierra's three-run homer in the eighth inning tied it. Rodriguez doubled, alertly stole third base and scored the go-ahead run on a wild pitch by Kyle Lohse to lift the Yankees over the Minnesota Twins, 6-5, on Saturday.

"What makes you a complete player and a winning player is being asked to the little things," Rodriguez said. "You can't play big ball all the time."

With this 3-1 win in the first-round playoff series, New York returned to Yankee Stadium—where the AL championship series opens Tuesday. Curt Schilling is likely to start for the Red Sox against Mike Mussina, both on ample rest.

The Twins led 5-1 behind ace Johan Santana before another New York rally. The Yankees came from behind for all three wins in this series after setting a major league record with 61 comeback victories during the regular season. Nine of those were from deficits of four runs or more.

For the second straight year, New York handed Minnesota a first-round playoff elimination in four games and advanced to the AL championship series to face Boston.

The Yankees won that matchup with Red Sox last October on Aaron Boone's homer in the 11th inning of Game 7. Boston was 11-8 against the Yankees this year.

Winning pitcher Mariano Rivera, who blew a rare postseason save chance in the eighth inning of Game 2, retired all six batters he faced to finish a stifling performance by the Yankees bullpen. After Javier Vazquez allowed five runs in five innings, Esteban Loaiza and Tom Gordon each threw two scoreless innings.

Lohse pitched a perfect 10th and started the 11th by handing Derek Jeter his fourth strikeout of the afternoon, but Rodriguez laced a double down the left-field line and stole third base on unsuspecting catcher Pat Borders—who didn't throw.

Then Lohse bounced a pitch to Sheffield that skipped past Borders, allowing Rodriguez to race home with the winning run.

That wild pitch silenced the Metrodome, where fans thought their AL Central champions would do better this year against the AL East winners. The Twins were on the verge of a two games-to-none lead Wednesday night when closer Joe Nathan failed to hold a one-run lead in the 12th inning.

The three-time champion Twins missed several chances to score in this game and head into another winter unsure how many players they'll be able to afford next year. *AP*

THE FEELING can't get any better for the New York
who celebrate after getting the final out against the
in Minneapolis. The Yankees beat the Twins ,6-5 in,
expectedly classic battle against fabled rival Boston.

BRANDON Backe of the Houston Astros pitches against Andruw Jones of the Atlanta Braves. The Astros won, 8-5, to take a 2-1 series lead AFP

Dodgers stay in hunt; Astros scuttle Braves

LOS ANGELES—Jose Lima pitched a complete game five-hitter and Shawn Green belted two home runs to lift the Los Angeles Dodgers to a 4-0 win over the St. Louis Cardinals in the National League playoffs Saturday.

The Cardinals now lead the best-of-five contest 2-1, with game four back at Dodger Stadium Sunday.

Elsewhere, the Houston Astros beat the Atlanta Braves, 8-5, to take a 2-1 advantage in their series.

Lima had four strikeouts and one walk in a dominant performance to keep the Dodgers alive in the series and earn Los Angeles its first post-season victory since winning the 1988 World Series.

It was his first complete game in more than three years.

Green clubbed solo homers in the fourth and sixth innings and had three hits. Steve Finley opened the scoring with a two-run single in the third.

Tony Womack and Jim Edmonds had two hits apiece for the Cardinals, who could not generate any offense against Lima after piling up 16 runs in the first two games of the series at home.

Matt Morris was the loser for the Cards, going seven innings. He allowed four runs on six hits with five strikeouts and two walks.

In Houston, Brandon Backe, a little-known local, brought the Astros to within one game of the franchise's first post-season series triumph.

Backe, a former outfielder who began pitching three years ago, gave up two runs against the Braves and struck out five batters in six innings while Morgan Ensberg drove in three runs on two clutch hits.

The Astros jumped into a 2-0 lead on a Carlos Beltran home run in the third, only to see the Braves tie it the next inning on a Johnny Estrada solo homer and an RBI single by Paul Byrd.

Byrd was called from the bullpen in the first frame when Braves starter John Thomson departed with a strained abdominal muscle after four pitches.

Byrd yielded four runs in 4 1/3 innings, including two in the fifth when Jeff Kent and Ensberg each had an RBI hit.

Ensberg helped secure victory in the sixth with a two-out, two-run double that extended Houston's lead to 7-2.

Andruw Jones pounded a late three-run homer to tighten the game but Brad Lidge set down the final three Atlanta batters for the save.

Houston manager Phil Garner knows all the stats, and usually goes with the trends: except when putting together his batting order.

Traditionally, hitters with better on-base percentages hit ahead of those with better slugging numbers. Reuters

Boston feels little pressure vs NY

HOUSTON—Feel pressure? Not this wild bunch of Boston Red Sox who bear the heavy burden of trying to end the team's 85-year championship drought.

Certainly, one of them will make a critical error at the wrong time or uncork a wild pitch with the score tied and the bases loaded.

Won't the pressure finally crush them after they swept the AL division series Friday with an 8-6 win over Anaheim?

"I can't see that," manager Terry Francona said Saturday.

"Yesterday, when I walked into the food room, I had a good feeling," Francona said.

"Most teams — this is the truth — most teams are watching 'Hoosiers.' I walk in the food room and there's John Belushi smashing a guitar over somebody's head in 'Animal House.'"

Hey, at least the players weren't throwing the food.

"They're right where they need to be," Francona said of their mental state as they prepare for the AL championship series.

The Red Sox take on their fierce rivals, the New York Yankees, after the latter dismissed the Minnesota Twins Saturday. "This is what everybody drew up in spring training and now everybody gets to see what it's all about," Yankees star Gary Sheffield said. *AP*

SCHUMACHER AP

Schumacher powers way to 6th

SUZUKA, Japan—Michael Schumacher won his first race since August and 13th of the season Sunday by claiming his sixth Japanese Grand Prix..

After having his troubles, including a 12th at the Chinese Grand Prix for his worst finish in a race since 1999, the seven-time world champion returned to his dominant form.

He feels he has nothing to prove.

"I didn't think too much about what happened at the last Grand Prix. I don't really take that into account, questioning anything," Schumacher said. "There wasn't really the extra pressure."

He won 12 of the first 13 races with Ferrari, then failed to win the previous three, before gaining his 83rd career victory Sunday.

Schumacher was ahead of brother Ralf in a Williams-BMW at the end
the 5.807-kilometer (3.609-m
circuit. BAR-Honda had Butto
ma Sato in third and fourth, al
ing second in the team standin
do Alonso of Renault was fifth.

It was Michael Schumacher
ry since the Hungarian GP in
his sixth at the Japanese GP
won every Japanese GP since

GERMAN Formula One driver Michael Schumacher of Ferrari (right) and yo
finish 1-2 in the Japanese Formula One Grand Prix in Suzuka.

US rules swim meet; Australia sets record

INDIANAPOLIS—The United States piled up four more victories at the World Short Course Championships on Saturday night, although the American women lost a thrilling medley relay final to Australia's world record-setting team.

The Americans won four of 10 finals on the meet's third night, giving them 14 victories in 23 events so far.

Jenny Thompson defeated a strong field in the final meet of her career to win the 50-meter butterfly, then put the United States in front during the fly leg of the 400 medley relay. But Kara Lynn Joyce couldn't hold the lead against Aussie anchor Lisbeth Lenton, whose 100 freestyle split of 52.05 was the fastest in history.

"I guess it took them a world record to beat us," Thompson said. "It was a great fight and we knew it was going to be."

Aussies Sophie Edington, Brooke Hanson, Jessica Schipper and Lenton won in 3 minutes, 54.95 seconds, lowering Sweden's old mark of 3:55.78 set in 2002. It was the meet's first world record in the 25-meter temporary pool. Sweden was third.

Backstroker Haley Cope gave the Americans the early lead. Tara Kirk dropped to second behind Hanson on the breaststroke portion before Thompson put the Americans back in front by 54-hundredths of a second during the fly. Lenton came off the final turn stronger than Joyce.

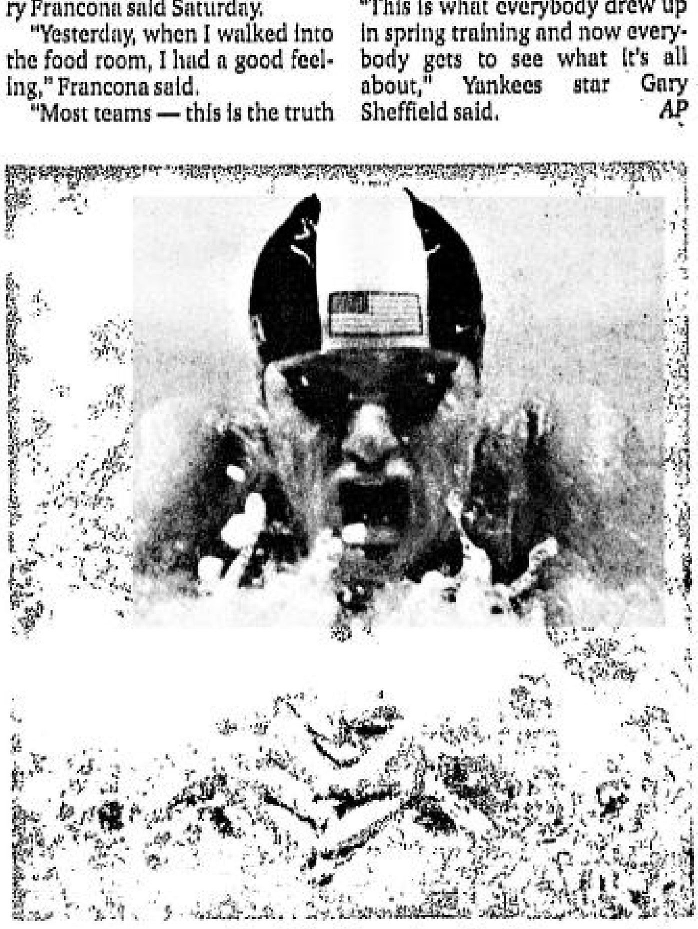
"It was really nice to get a victory on their home soil, but we're not going to rub it in because they might get us the next time," Lenton said. "It was neck and neck with everyone coming down to me. I just came out, concentrated on my race plan and it came down to the last turn."

Kaitlin Sandeno won her fourth gold medal of the meet and Brendan Hansen completed a sweep of the breaststroke events by winning the 200 for the Americans, who are without injured star Michael Phelps. He withdrew Friday with a back injury after winning the 200 freestyle.

"If it's in your own pool, you're not going to make a fool of yourself," said Mark Foster of Britain, who won the 50 free at age 34.

Spurring on the home team was a crowd of 11,488—largest at a non-Olympic swimming event in the United States.

"When they announce USA and everyone goes ballistic, it's absolutely incredible," said Margaret Hoelzer, who won the 200 backstroke. *AP*



BRENDAN Hansen of the United States breathes in between strokes in the men's 200-meter breast stroke at the World Short Course Championships in Indianapolis. REUTERS

Levi eyes second straig

SPRING, Texas—Wayne Levi shot a 5-under 67 Saturday to take a two-shot lead over D.A. Weibring after two rounds of the Administaff Small Business Classic.

Levi, coming off a victory at the Constellation Energy Classic and bidding for consecutive wins for the first time in his career, moved to 13-under 131 at Augusta Pines Golf Club. Weibring carded a 7-under 65 to get to 133.

Hale Irvin (68) is another two shots back at 135.

Walter Hall, who shared a two-shot lead with Levi after an opening 64, had
round 72 and dropped five strok
pace. He's tied with Peter Jacobsen
Thorpe (69), John Harris (69) and
(70) at 136.

Levi surged to the lead quickly
ond round, making birdies on four
five holes. He added a birdie at No
to 14 under, but lost a stroke at 1
first bogey in 53 holes.

Weibring extended his streak of
par or better to 20. A transplant
Weibring was loose throughout

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Sharapova lights Asian love affair

TOKYO—Asia has fallen in love with Wimbledon champion Maria Sharapova—and the feeling is mutual.

The 17-year-old Russian starlet left here Sunday with two more WTA titles safely packed away in her luggage after a successful three-leg swing through the Far East which won her a new legion of admirers.

The last of her victories was a 6-0, 6-1 destruction of American Mashona Washington in the Japan Open final which attracted 9,288 spectators despite a howling typhoon which battered the region.

It followed her victory in the inaugural Korea Open a week earlier, a win watched by around 8,000 spectators, an unusually large audience for tennis in South Korea.

The only blemish was Sharapova's defeat to US Open champion Svetlana Kuznetsova in the China Open semifinals two weeks ago, but it has not dampened her fondness for playing in Asia.

"I want to come back," said Sharapova when asked about her Asian tour. "I just, for some reasons, I don't know why, play well and feel really good here, and fans are amazing." "That's the reason why I want to come back and always see them again and try to play my best, so I definitely want to come back." Despite the Japan Open women's tournament being a substantially poorer event in terms of prize-money than its men's counterpart, all the attention last week was focused on Sharapova.

Men's finalist Taylor Dent said he was not bothered by being overshadowed by Sharapova and the women's event.

"I think the women are great assets to men's tennis and tennis in general. I think the more attention they create the more events we will have, so it's vice versa," said the American.

"So if they are getting attention, it's great for us, it's great just to be a part of that. Hopefully, the matches are up to everybody's expectations, and we provide good entertainment.

Sharapova captured her first career WTA singles and doubles titles a year ago here, and also won her first professional title in the ITF Circuit series in Gunma, north of Tokyo, two years ago.

The only disappointment for Sharapova in Tokyo was that her name was not carved on the winner's trophy.

"By the way, they haven't updated this trophy, there's not my name on it, the last person is 2001, which is (Monica) Seles. We are in the 21st century. Come on! three years behind," complained Sharapova. *AFP*

SHARAPOVA: Asian sweetheart AFP

Lehman nears first crown in four years

LAS VEGAS, Nevada—Tom Lehman is poised to grab his first victory in four years after claiming a one-shot lead following the third round of the $4 million Las Vegas Invitational on Saturday.

The 45-year-old American, who has not won since the 2000 Phoenix Open, fired a six-under-par 66 at Bear's Best, one of three courses being used here this week, for a 17-under total of 198.

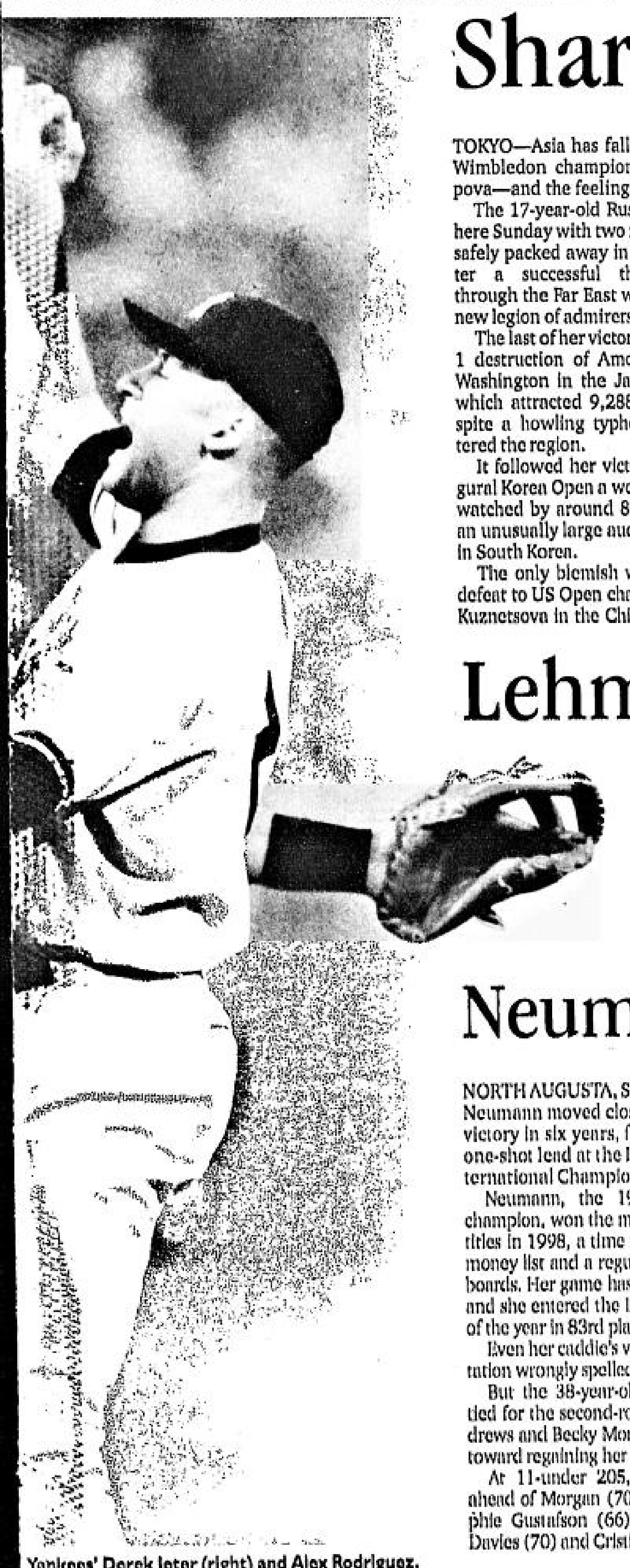
Former British Open champion Lehman has only one top-10 finish to his credit this year, a tie for fourth place at last month's Canadian Open.

Dicky Pride (66) and Australia's Andre Stolz (65) shared second position on 199.

Overnight leader JL Lewis fell back into a tie for fourth on 200 after a one-under 70 at the TPC at The Canyons course. He was joined on that mark by Australia's Greg Chalmers, Bob Estes, Olin Browne, Tim Petrovic, Duffy Waldorf and Harrison Frazar.

A total of 17 players were within four shots of Lehman at the end of the round.

Lehman, one of the back-nine starters, birdied two of his first three holes. He bogeyed the 14th before bouncing back with a birdie hat-trick from the 15th. *Reuters*



Yankees' Derek Jeter (right) and Alex Rodriguez,
Minnesota Twins in Game 4 of division series playoffs
1 innings to win the series and advance to another
AP

Neumann paces Asahi tilt

NORTH AUGUSTA, South Carolina—Liselotte Neumann moved closer to her first LPGA Tour victory in six years, firing a 69 Saturday for a one-shot lead at the LPGA Asahi Ryokuken International Championship.

Neumann, the 1988 US Women's Open champion, won the most recent of her 12 LPGA titles in 1998, a time when she was fifth on the money list and a regular near the top of leaderboards. Her game has steadily fallen since then, and she entered the LPGA's final full-field event of the year in 83rd place on the money list.

Even her caddie's vest at Mount Vintage Plantation wrongly spelled her name as "Newmann."

But the 38-year-old Swede, who had been tied for the second-round lead with Donna Andrews and Becky Morgan, took another big step toward regaining her elite status.

At 11-under 205, Neumann was a stroke ahead of Morgan (70) and three in front of Sophie Gustafson (66), Grace Park (68), Laura Davies (70) and Cristie Kerr (70).

Neumann has won four of the past five tournaments she's led entering the final round.

"That's a pretty good stat," she said, grinning. "The odds are pretty good."

Especially with Neumann back on her game.

She had birdies on two of her first three holes, including a tap-in on the par-3 third when her tee shot finished 3 feet from the cup. Neumann took the lead outright when Andrews misplayed a tricky downhill chip on the fourth for bogey.

Neumann added birdies on the 10th and 12th holes to extend her lead.

Her only slip-up was on the par-3 15th when her tee shot landed next to a tree. She had to chip backwards away from the flagstick, then hit up within 5 feet and make the bogey putt.

Neumann scrambled at the end, saving par with a 7-footer on the 17th and a 3-footer on the 18th.

Although she hadn't held a lead in an LPGA event since the Nabisco Championships in 2002, Neumann felt peaceful when play began here. *AP*

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Ferrari has
1999, with three different drivers — Eddie Irvine 1999; Schumacher 2000-2002 and 2004 and Rubens Barrichello 2003.

"Coming here to Suzuka, which is a circuit I like very much, it's just nice and great," said Schumacher, who won here for Ferrari (1997) and Benetton (1995).

The German went winless in three straight races, while teammate Barrichello took the last two. *AP*

unger brother Ralf Schumacher of Williams BMW
AFP

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d Texan,
e second round, getting updates on the progress of the Texas-Oklahoma football game and the Astros and Braves playoff game from scorekeepers.

Weibring had three birdies and an eagle on his first four holes to move into contention for his second title of the year. He won the Allianz Championship in May and has 14 top-10 finishes this season.

He tied for sixth at last week's Constellation Energy Classic and hasn't had an over-par round since a 73 in the first round of the Greater Hickory Classic on Aug. 20. *AP*

Ryder Cup stars crowd leaderboard

ST. ANDREWS, Scotland—Luke Donald shot a 4-under-par 68 Saturday at Carnoustie for a three-day total of 17-under 199, leaving him two strokes ahead of three others in the Dunhill Links Championship.

Ryder Cup teammates Ian Poulter and David Howell were on 201. Poulter carded an excellent 65 at Carnoustie, the most difficult of the three courses being played. Howell, the overnight leader, shot a 71 at Carnoustie.

They were joined by Graeme McDowell. The Northern Irishman, who shot a record-equaling 10-under 62 on The Old Course on Thursday, followed it with a 72 Friday at Carnoustie and a 5-under 67 Saturday at Kingsbarns.

The final round Sunday was set for the Old Course.

Stephen Gallacher of Scotland was three strokes off the lead after a 66 Saturday at the Old Course. Four other, including Ernie Els, were a further two shots behind. Els shot 68 Saturday at Carnoustie.

World No. 1 Vijay Singh had a 69 Saturday at Carnoustie, leaving him eight shots off the lead.

Among the causalities of the 212 halfway cut were Padraig Harrington and Thomas Bjorn.

Donald's 68 was his highest score off the week, but it came at the most difficult layout.

"It (Carnoustie) is tougher off the tee, and you have to think about every shot. You really have to thread it through the bunkers."

The Englishman said he was surprised how well he had played the links courses.

"I changed my game when I went to the States, trying to hit softer shots higher and further. That is obviously not the way to play links golf.

"But I still remember how to play links golf, how to play the bump and run shots and the shot under the wind. I played a lot of links golf growing up," Donald added.

Poulter began with a bogey when he missed the green from 99 yards trying to play a high shot.

Howell said he had not swung the club as well for his 71 after 65s in the first two rounds earned him the halfway lead.

"And I made a couple of mental errors. But I'm confident of playing well tomorrow," he said.

Els said his driving was good but he was not putting well enough. Among his misses was a 3-footer for birdie at the short 13th. *AP*

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PBL expansion team has ace known as Baby Shaq

NEWCOMER Granny Goose Tortillos of General Milling Corp. (GMC) expects rough sailing in the Philippine Basketball League Open championship which starts on Oct. 23.

But the Cebu-based squad is no patsy and is out to bring its winning legacy to the Big City.

The team has the youthful exuberance, talent and never-say-die attitude Cebuano squads are noted for and that make them dangerous and a prospective crowd-drawer.

GMC is one of the founding members of the Cebu Basketball Federation (CBF) and its team, the General Feedmasters, have already won several titles in Visayas and Mindanao.

Even without seasoned players, the GMC management, led by executive director Kirk Steven Young, is convinced the team can achieve its modest goal in its maiden campaign.

Team manager Pat Aquino said Granny Goose will be bannered by University of Visayas star Ronald Joseph Quinahan, currently the hottest player in the South. A dead ringer for NBA megastar Shaquille O'Neal, the 6-foot-5 Quinahan is even called "Baby Shaq."

Calling the shots for the team is former national hotshot Jun Tan, who is excited to return to the league that has made him one of the Cebuano idols in the '80s.

Quinahan will be backstopped by seven University of the Philippines players, among them Abby Santos, Toti Almeda, Jireh Ybanez and Nestor David.

Also in the roster are Rex Mangubat, Alfie Grijaldo, Chico Lanete, Ardy Larong, Jett Latonio, Dennis Cocha, Marvin Cruz and Joseph Cervantez.

The team is also hoping to sign up Ronald Capati and Jam Alfad to boost its frontline rotation.

"Definitely we don't have star players in the team but we will do our best every game since this is our maiden campaign. We have to play hard and challenge ourselves always," said Aquino, who also acknowledged the all-out support given by basketball operations manager Albert Tan and Pico Gonzales of UP.

To prepare mentally and physically for the tough battle ahead, Granny Goose will hold a 10-day team bonding in Cebu along with the UP players starting this week.

GMC officials said their entry in the league is already a major victory, saying they have long been waiting for the right opportunity to expand the company's participation in sports activities all over the country.

"The tie-up with the PBL beginning with the Open Championship gives GMC an effective and popular venue for promoting amateur basketball," Ric M. Pinca, GMC's director for corporate affairs, said.

0:35:45
Queen of The Road

FILIPINA IS FASTEST
Mercedita Manipol (left) checks her watch as she breasts the tape in ruling the adidas Queen of the Road race in Seoul, South Korea, yesterday. The University of the East track team standout clocked a course-record 35 minutes and 45 seconds in besting runners from Hong Kong, Korea, Malaysia and Thailand. Inset, Manipol, holding her Golden Boot trophy, with adidas Korea managing director Wolfgang Beintheimer.

WNCAA CAGING

Lyceum gains finals

ALL BUT two twice-to-beat squads barged into the finals Saturday after finishing off their respective foes at the start of the basketball and volleyball semifinals of the WNCAA's 35th season.

Lyceum sent its seniors teams to the basketball and volleyball championships, after disposing off Rizal Technological University, 56-37, at the St. Scholastica gym and newcomer University of Asia and the Pacific, 25-11, 25-17, 25-12, at the CSB gym.

Miriam College and RTU labored through four sets before setting up a finals duel in juniors volleyball.

Miriam stopped La Salle College Antipolo, 25-23, 25-16, 14-25, 25-22, while RTU defeated SBCA, 25-19, 15-25, 25-22, 25-21.

Host San Beda College Alabang and St. Scholastica will dispute the midgets crown.

SBCA downed De La Salle Zobel, 25-13, 22-25, 25-19, followed by St. Scho's 25-12, 25-20 mastery of Miriam.

Forcing playoffs are Centro Escolar University, which edged defending champion and No. 2 team College of St. Benilde, 66-61, and No. 3 team RTU besting No. 2 University of the Assumption-Pampanga, 17-25, 25-23, 25-19, 25-17.

The league's 35th season is co-presented by Kotex and sponsored by adidas, The Philippine Star, RPN 9, Monster Radio RX 93.1, Pantene and Café Lupe, in cooperation with Cadbury, Goldilocks, Powerade, Molten, Mikasa and Centrum.

Sertan, Sarabia bag PBC Open titles

UNIVERSITY of the East's Rodil Sertan downed schoolmate Heidenberg Dimarucut, 15-8, 15-13, to win the men's singles title in the Del Monte 202 Cup First Philippine Badminton Collegiate Open at the SM Megamall Atrium recently.

The ladies' singles title went to Far Eastern University's Criselda Sarabia, who scored an 11-2, 11-3 victory over De La Salle's Michelle Guerrero.

In the men's doubles, De La Salle's Michael Paclibar and Rhaul Angeles downed UE's RJ Cruz and Edison Cupcupin, 15-7, 15-9.

Paclibar teamed up with Paula Chan to capture the mixed doubles championship over UE's Cupcupin and Jane de Jesus, 15-5, 15-6, while Paula and twin sister Therine bagged the girls' doubles title over FEU's Sarabia and Ma. Theresa Sebastian, 15-9, 15-9.

Champions received trophies, P25,000 cash and Sony Ericsson T230 mobile phones. The runners-up got P15,000 cash and P1,000 gift certificate from Advance Speed and Academic Professionals while the third placers received P8,000 cash plus trophies.

Letran remembers a forgotten sports leader

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

IT'S A PITY, but the contribution of former President Manuel L. Quezon to Philippine sports has remained largely forgotten, much less publicly honored, except by a few who still remember his lasting legacy.

I don't mean to offend, but Filipino sports officials, including those from the Philippine Olympic Committee, have not given much credit and recognition to Quezon, the first Filipino to become president of the defunct Philippine Amateur Athletic Federation, forerunner of the POC. The diminutive MLQ headed the PAAF from 1916 until 1935.

Quezon was not an athlete in the strict definition of the term, but he played an important role in Philippine sports as he fully appreciated the value of sports to the physical development of his countrymen. As president, he did not only promote sports in the country; he also promoted the idea of competing in international sporting events. Quezon was not only a man of his nation but of the world.

During his term, the Philippines debuted in the Olympics, sending sprinter David Nepomuceno to the Paris Games of 1924. Likewise, it was during Quezon's term that the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex was built. When it was completed in 1936, the complex was the most modern in Asia then.

A true-blue sports fan, Quezon regularly attended NCAA basketball matches at the Rizal Coliseum where he rooted for Letran, his alma mater, while his children, Baby, Nini and Nonong, cheered for La Salle.

This Saturday afternoon, Oct. 16, Letran will honor former Letran athletes and sports leaders, including Quezon and the others who contributed to sports development like POC president Celso Dayrit, whose father, Francisco Dayrit, was a fencing instructor at Letran; former POC president Col. Julian Malonso (ret.), businessman-civic leader Eugenio "Gene" Puyat, who was the boxing association head when Anthony Villanueva won a silver medal in the 1964 Tokyo Olympics, and Col. Salvador Andrada (tennis), Benjamin Ramos (rowing), and Dr. Anthony Nicanor Jr. of the Philippine Sports Commission. The ceremony starts at 2 p.m. Deceased athletes and honorees will be represented by their nearest kin.

***

PATRIOTIC ACT, BUT PRACTICAL IT IS NOT. There is no question that the PBA's quest to qualify for the 2008 Beijing Olympic basketball competition is a good idea, but practical it is not. Although Philippine chances of qualifying for the next Olympics are better this time since host China gets an outright entry to the tournament proper (leaving the remaining Asian countries to dispute not one but two slots for the region), I still say the task ahead is tough. Why? Because Filipino players still have to beat the region's next best teams such as South Korea, Kazakhstan, Lebanon and, who knows, even Japan in the qualifier. And, even granting that the Filipino cagers hurdle their qualifying-round assignments, their chances of winning in the next round, the Olympic proper, will be very, very slim. The Philippines last competed in Olympic basketball in 1972 in Munich.

In Olympic basketball, the PBA should accept the fact that tall players definitely have the advantage over their shorter opponents, which places the Filipinos—who are not meant to be genetically tall—at a great disadvantage.

As I have said time and again, the Philippines' only chance to win that elusive Olympic gold medal will be in sports where height is not might, in sporting disciplines like boxing, taekwondo, archery, billiards, bowling and chess, if ever the last three events are included in the Olympic menu.

Basketball enjoyed tremendous following in the 1950s and 1960s when the Philippines was the perennial champion of the Asian Games and the ABC tournaments. The basketball mania started in 1954 when the national team led by Hall of Famers Carlos Loyzaga and Lauro Mumar won third place in the World Basketball Championship in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

However, the decline of Philippine basketball, specifically in the Asiad, started during the late 1960s.

By the way, statistics showed that PBA crowd attendance suffered after every debacle in the Asian Games beginning in 1990 when the pro league first assumed the responsibility of representing the Philippines in the quadrennial meet. In my opinion, these embarrassing setbacks were the major reasons why Filipino fans have shied away from most of the PBA games. The fans want winners, not perennial losers.

***

(My family and I condole with a longtime friend, Gerry Carpio, the assistant sports editor of the Philippine Star, whose eldest son, 19-year-old Peter John, died recently after a vehicular accident. Our prayers, too, to Bong Pedralvez of the Manila Times on the death of his father.

SPORTSWATCH

Ormoc event boosts sports tourism

ORMOC City plays host to a big gathering of mountain bikers, racers, cyclists, and other health and sport enthusiasts in the Terry Larrazabal Bike Festival slated Oct. 22-24. The weekend event is expected to advance the growth of sports tourism in the country. Tourism Secretary Joseph "Ace" Durano has expressed enthusiasm over the bike festival. "This is very timely. We have just celebrated the National Tourism Week which espoused the importance of sports in the tourism industry for mutual understanding and social development. I hope this will also promote Ormoc City and its neighboring towns as key tourist destinations in the country," Durano said. The Terry Larrazabal Bike Festival will also provide a venue for the launching of the Philippine Off-Road Bicycling Association. For inquiries, call 0921-5869968 or e-mail tlbf@pldtdsl.net, or log on to www.terrylarrazabalbikefest.com.

World Bike Festival kicks off Oct. 24

MORE than a thousand bikers are expected to join the first ever World Bike Festival slated Oct. 24 at the CCP grounds in Pasay City. Organized by APL Events, the biking festival will be held in conjunction with the celebration of the United Nations' Day. The three-hour activity will start at 6 a.m. A program featuring TV and movie celebrities follows at 9 a.m. in the festival backed by Red Bull, Viva Mineral Water and Manila Bank. For sponsorship, registration and inquiries, call APL Events at 7422587, 4932023, 0927-9169441, or e-mail apl_events@yahoo.com.

Cockfight 'heavies' clash at LPC today

THE RIVALRY among cockfighting heavyweights heats up anew tonight as the Gentlemen Cockers Association of the Philippines 5-Stag Derby kicks off with 51 fights at the air-conditioned Las Piñas Coliseum. The derby is sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000 and Pagcor-Casino Filipino. The grand championship in this, the sixth of seven GCAP stagfests scheduled at LPC, will be held on Oct. 18, said coliseum manager Alex Tobias. Leading the Stagfighter race with 17.5 points apiece are popular cockfighter Patrick Antonio (Sagupaan Complexor 3000) and partners Ramon Mancenares and Tony Faustino (EDL Farms). Love U Papa of Benjie Lim has 15.5 markers, while Mulawin A of former Rep. Rudy Albano, PEBR of Pol Estrellado and Boy Royo, and Agilahas of Mayor Ashley and Jenjen Arayata have 14.5 points each. The Stagfighter winner and runner-up will receive P300,000 and P100,000, respectively. GCAP president Patrick Antonio said the Stagfighter's handler and gaffer will also get P70,000 and P30,000 in recognition of their efforts. For inquiries, call 8731040 and 8743910.

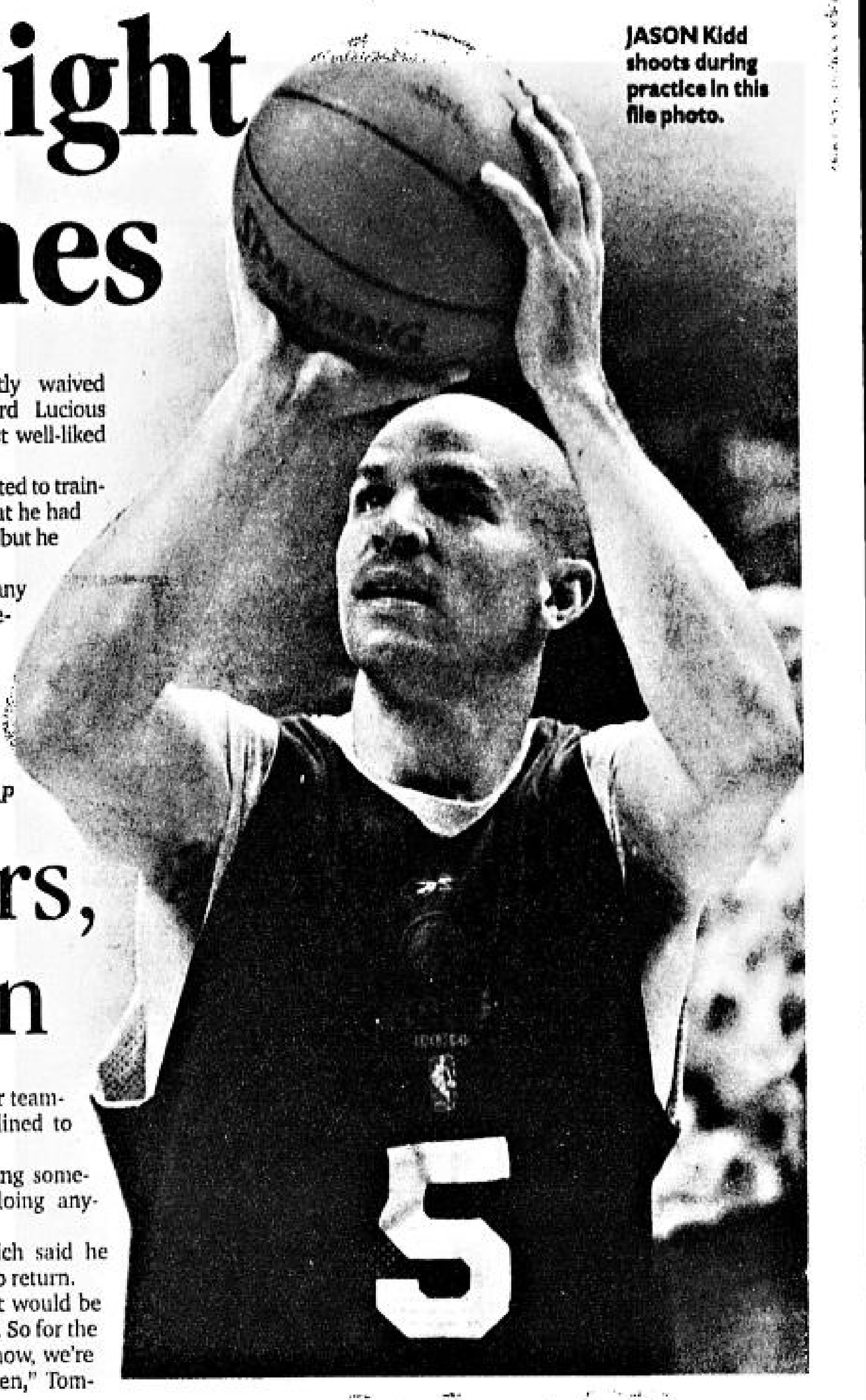
De la Cerna-Padao tops Minda derby

DAVAO CITY—The unheralded partnership of Rufino "Nonoy" de la Cerna and William Padao defied all odds to win the Mindanao Gamefowl Breeders Association's P3-million 7-Stag Derby held here recently. The duo's Kimora 249 entry made known its intentions by breezing through the eliminations last Oct. 2, beating Madang Gallera of Gauden Wee and two other entries from this city. In last Saturday's 4-stag finals, the loyal Thunderbird Power Feeds users' fleet of Sweater-Kelso and Sweater-Grey crosses out of broodstocks from Padao's former boss, the late Mayor Joel Brillantes, overcame the challenges of Mindanao's cockfighting giants to emerge as sole winner. Kimora 249 lorded it over the entries Shirley of Carmen Mayor Roger Taliño, CPB Farm of World Slasher champ Rep. Claude Bautista, Mabolo of Dr. Fernandez and Nelson Sala, and 2004 Candelaria derby hero Edwin Deles. Saying their roosters used Thunderbird Baby Stag Booster and Thunderbird Stag Developer, the duo first made their presence felt in Tagum City Cockpit last August when they swept all their four matches during the ATU Cup Stag Derby hosted by Chungkee Uy. Solo runner-up honors went to the entry Janis of Jun de Leon and Burt Austria, which scored 6.5 points. Among those who finished with 6 points were Majestic Predator of Peter Gotiance and the Ampil Brothers, SF Blue Quartz of Bebot Uy, PB MGCR of Dr. Gener Rubio, Kaayaaya of Ruben Santos, Bida of Rudy Altamera, Amanda of Jun de Leon and Bert Austria, Alcon Fancy of Danny Loyola, Roger of Mayor Roger Taliño, and LG Farm of Marion Ondoy and Yoyong Go.

TELECOM TOPNOTCHERS: Members of the Globe Telecom/Innove badminton team, led by team captain Richard Huliganga (seventh from left, standing) savor the moment with National Telecommunications Commission commissioner Roland Olivar Solis (ninth from left) and Deputy Commissioner George Sarmiento (10th from left) after ruling the group eliminations and advancing to the quarterfinals of the 2nd Commissioner's Cup held recently at the Star Smash Badminton Center on Timog Avenue, Quezon City. The other team members are Lance Martinez, Richard Zenarosa, Melgar Olaes, April Donato, Mae Zarris, Luigi Reyes, Roy Villanueva, Nathaniel Siongco, Glenn Flores, Roselle Pascual and Mitch Villanueva.

CEREMONIAL TOSS: Eriergy Secretary Vincent Perez (center) makes the toss for the recent basketball exhibition game featuring the Shell Turbochargers and the Department of Energy "Dream Team" at Shell Linear Park in Pandacan, Manila. The game, held in cooperation with Pilipinas Shell, is part of the information and education campaign of the National Energy Conservation Program of the government. Getting ready for the toss are Elmer Malbog of the DOE team (left) and Shell's Jun Marsan.

Kidd rejoins Nets' night practices to duck fines


JASON Kidd shoots during practice in this file photo.

EAST RUTHERFORD, New Jersey—Jason Kidd is going to attend both day and night practices during the New Jersey Nets' training camp rather than pay fines he feels are misguided.

The All-Star point guard was fined by the Nets this week for missing practices at night.

While he didn't question the Nets' right to fine him, Kidd debated the wisdom of being there because he was undergoing rehabilitation on his surgically repaired left knee and was unable to practice.

"My rehab will last until 11 o'clock," said Kidd, who is undergoing rehabilitation seven days a week. "A lot of people don't understand the stuff I'm doing to get back and play. So I'll be here tonight, and then I'll be here every day for practice until I have to go to rehab."

Under the collective bargaining agreement, players can be penalized $2,500 for each of the first two practices they miss and $5,000 for each subsequent absence.

"I don't mind donating, but only for a good cause," Kidd said on Saturday. "And that's not a good cause. It's easier just to come to practice, hang out, help the guys out and go from there."

Kidd said he would not appeal the fines.

"It just makes my day longer, in the sense of going to rehab and coming back from rehab and going back to rehab again after the night practice," Kidd said.

Kidd and the Nets have been at odds in recent months with trades of All-Star forward Kenyon Martin to Denver and shooting guard Kerry Kittles to the Los Angeles Clippers in cost-saving moves.

New Jersey recently waived backup shooting guard Lucious Harris, one of the most well-liked players on the team.

When the Nets reported to training camp, Kidd said that he had not asked to be traded, but he dreamed of it.

"I don't have too many dreams right now because I'm so tired," Kidd said.

"Right now I'm trying to get healthy. I have nothing to do with being traded." *AP*

KARL Malone is open to anything, including a return to a Lakers uniform. AP

Malone visits Lakers, leaves options open

SAN DIEGO—Karl Malone showed up at the Los Angeles Lakers training camp to visit old teammates and club officials.

Malone's visit Saturday was purely social and had no bearing on whether he might play this season, team officials said.

"It's not a bad sign, but really it's not a sign either way," said Lakers general manager Mitch Kupchak, adding the club would welcome Malone's presence on the court.

The 41-year-old Malone, the second-leading scorer in NBA history, underwent arthroscopic surgery on his right knee in late June. He opted out of his $1.65-million contract with the Lakers at season's end, making him a free agent.

Malone has said he's not ready to play but hasn't ruled out returning this season.

"He's leaving his options open," Malone's agent, Dwight Manley, said last week.

Malone arrived as practice was winding down, and chatted with his former teammates and shook hands. He declined to comment on his future plans.

"Talk to the guys who are doing something," Malone said. "I'm not doing anything."

Lakers coach Rudy Tomjanovich said he wouldn't try to persuade Malone to return.

"That would be something that would be grinding and grinding all the time. So for the mental health of the team right now, we're going as if it isn't going to happen," Tomjanovich said.

Kupchak said Malone appeared in good physical condition.

"He looks great," Kupchak said. "I've never seen him when he doesn't look great."

Forward Brian Grant, who missed practice for two days with a sore neck, returned in a closed team scrimmage Friday night. *AP*

Gritty Novak bags Japan Open crown

TOKYO—Jiri Novak of the Czech Republic won the Japan Open tennis title with a 5-7, 6-1, 6-3 victory over American Taylor Dent at Ariake Colosseum on Sunday.

The fifth-seeded Novak, who beat Lleyton Hewitt in the semifinals on Saturday, overcame the seventh seed with some ruthlessly efficient ground strokes.

It was the 29-year-old Novak's sixth ATP title and he earned $118,000 for the win.

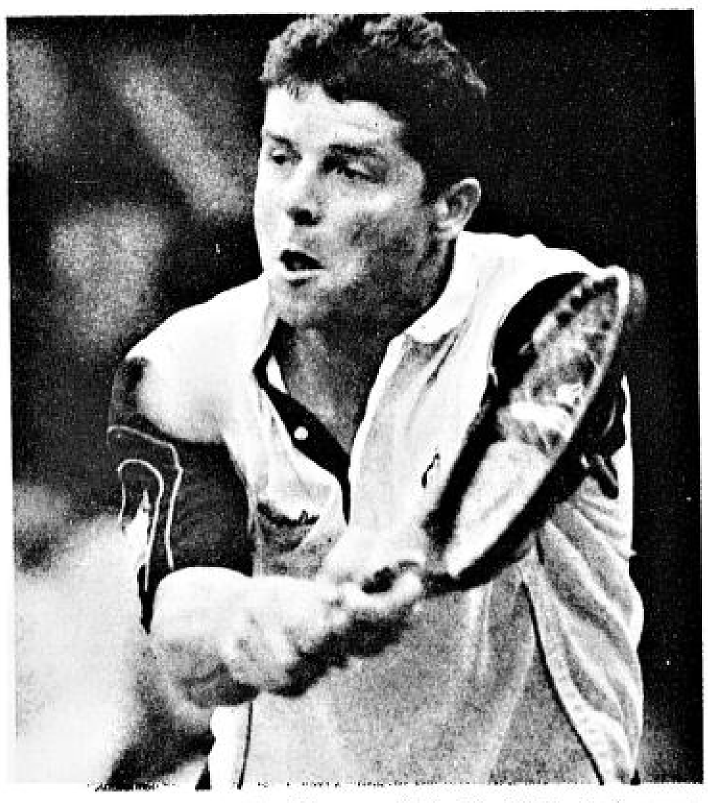
"I felt great the whole week," the world No. 28 said. "I beat Paradorn (Srichaphan) and (Lleyton) Hewitt, and Dent in the final, so I feel I was playing very well in Tokyo."

"This is my sixth title and I'm very excited about it."

After a sloppy first set in which there were five breaks of serve, the game settled down into a cat-and-mouse affair with the 23-year-old Dent trying to upset the rhythm of the Czech.

"I think we both started out a bit nervously, losing service games, but my confidence was high in the second and third sets and I think I was the better player on the court," said Novak.

Dent's willingness to attack the net, combined with Novak's only double fault of the match on set point, helped him to secure the first set. *Reuters*


JIRI Novak makes a backhand return to Taylor Dent in the finals. REUTERS

Beckham sustains fracture

MANCHESTER, England—England skipper David Beckham suffered a hairline fracture to one of his ribs during England's 2-0 win over Wales at Old Trafford, X-rays revealed late on Saturday.

An FA spokesperson confirmed that a second set of X-rays revealed the extent of the injury after an earlier set appeared to give him the all-clear.

But it was not immediately clear how long the injury would sideline him for.

Beckham had an afternoon to remember back at Old Trafford where he spent more than a decade of his career with Manchester United.

He scored a spectacular goal after 76 minutes to secure England's victory, then got himself booked and suspended for their next qualifier in Baku against Azerbaijan on Wednesday.

After the match, England coach Sven-Goran Eriksson praised Beckham for his goal rather than scolded him for a pointless yellow card which earned him his suspension.

Asked if he thought the booking irresponsible, Eriksson told a news conference: "No, I don't think so. Let's talk about the goal he scored instead, because that was an important goal.

"As long as it's 1-0, even if you create chances, you are never calm on the bench. Two to zero killed the game. We told the players at halftime we needed a second goal . . . and it came." Eriksson said that striker Michael Owen, who has deputized for Beckham in the past, would probably wear the skipper's armband on Wednesday.

Impressed by Owen's lively performance after a difficult start to his Real Madrid career, Eriksson said: "I don't know if he'll be credited with the first goal or not, but I think he played very well. *Reuters*

Davenport tops Porsche tournament

FILDERSTADT, Germany—Lindsay Davenport captured the Porsche Grand Prix Sunday and moved closer to the top ranking when Amelie Mauresmo retired from the final with a left thigh injury.

Davenport won the first set, 6-2, in a meeting between the world's No. 1 and No. 2, and Mauresmo then withdrew after her heavily taped thigh hampered her movement.

Davenport said she was disappointed at how she won her tour-high seventh title of the year and 45th of her career.

"It's just a bad feeling—there's not a whole lot of joy in winning like this," Davenport said. "We played maybe one tough game, the first game, then her leg started bothering her."

Mauresmo said she got injured in the third game when Davenport broke her serve to move ahead 2-1. After the next game, she left the court to get her thigh taped and was unable to chase down the American's shots for the rest of the set.

"I am a little disappointed because I think we would have played a great match," Mauresmo said.

The American is now just 15 points behind Mauresmo in the WTA rankings, 4,395 to 4,380, and the top ranking could switch hands next week at the Kremlin Cup. AP

Argentina, Brazil crush foes in qualifiers for World Cup

RIO DE JANEIRO—Argentina and Brazil scored crushing victories in Saturday's World Cup qualifiers, the former beating Uruguay, 4-2, in Buenos Aires and the world champions romping home, 5-2, in Venezuela.

Argentina, playing their first match under new coach Jose Pekerman, raced into a 4-0 lead after 54 minutes with a Luciano Figueroa double and a goal apiece from Luis Gonzalez and Javier Zanetti.

Cristian Rodriguez and Javier Chevanton, from a twice-taken penalty, made the scoreline respectable for Uruguay.

Two goals each from Kaka and Ronaldo and one by Adriano, seven minutes after coming off the substitutes' bench, put Brazil 5-0 ahead in Maracaibo.

Ruberth Moran then pulled two back, doubling Venezuela's tally of goals in their 16 meetings with Brazil, who have won them all.

Venezuela could be in serious trouble after two fans went on to the field in the second half to hug Roberto Carlos and Ronaldo.

In other games, Colombia wasted a hatful of chances as it was held to a 1-1 draw by Paraguay in Barranquilla while Bolivia stayed at the bottom of the group table despite beating Peru, 1-0, in a scrappy match in La Paz.

As the South American World Cup qualifying section reaches the halfway mark, Brazil leads with 19 points from nine games with Argentina one point behind. Both look certain to qualify for Germany 2006.

They are followed by Paraguay (15), Chile (12), Ecuador, Uruguay, Venezuela (10) and Colombia, Peru and Bolivia (9).

Ecuador and Chile complete the weekend's program in Quito on Sunday. *Reuters*

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SPORTS

Final SEAG Fed meeting under way

THE SOUTHEAST Asian Games Federation convenes for its final two-day meeting starting today at the New World Hotel in Makati City to finalize the number of sports and their respective events for the 23rd SEA Games the country will host next year.

Thirty-four sports have already been approved during the first federation meeting here last March, but seven other sports are still lobbying for inclusion despite the current financial crisis that had earlier threatened the holding of the biennial sportsfest here for the third time since 1981.

While the Philippine Olympic Committee and the Philsoc (Philippine SEA Games Organizing Committee) have the prerogative to propose the games' roster of sports, the SEAG Federation has the authority to decide on the final list of sports and events to be played.

"The SEA Games Federation understands the tight (financial) situation in the country and is willing to extend its cooperation in finding the right balance between the number of sports and the events to be played," said POC president Celso Dayrit, who will preside over the meeting as head of the 11-nation federation.

Dayrit explained that while the federation may permit more sports to come in, the number of events must be maintained at a reasonable level to achieve cost efficiency in organizing the games.

The SEAG Sports and Rules Committee chaired by Rene Adad will meet this morning to discuss the final list of sports and events.

The committee's recommendations will be tackled this afternoon by the SEAG executive committee, which will submit its decision to the federation during its en banc meeting tomorrow.

Among the sports seeking last-minute spots in the already crowded program are weightlifting and lawn tennis, which are regular SEAG events.

The 1997 Jakarta Games is the biggest so far with 36 sports and 490 events. The 1999 Brunei Games owns the distinction of holding the least sports with only 22.

Following a resolution passed by the federation to maintain manageability of the games by reducing the number of events, the POC is expected to present only 375 events, as recommended by the national sports associations.

The inclusion of at least two more sports disciplines—lawn tennis and weightlifting—will also be discussed.

Also to be discussed is a proposal to move the original Nov. 20-30 schedule next year to Nov. 27-Dec. 5.

Meanwhile, Philippine Sports Commission chair Eric Buhain and Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit will make a presentation today declaring the SEAG a "smoke free" event during a luncheon the PSC will host for the delegates.

The country hopes to wrest the overall championship after coming close to pulling off the feat in 1991.

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Nat'l chess team meet slated in Tagaytay Dec. 1-7

THE COUNTRY'S leading players converge in Tagaytay City again on Dec. 1-7 for the 2004 National Inter-Cities and Municipalities chess team championship.

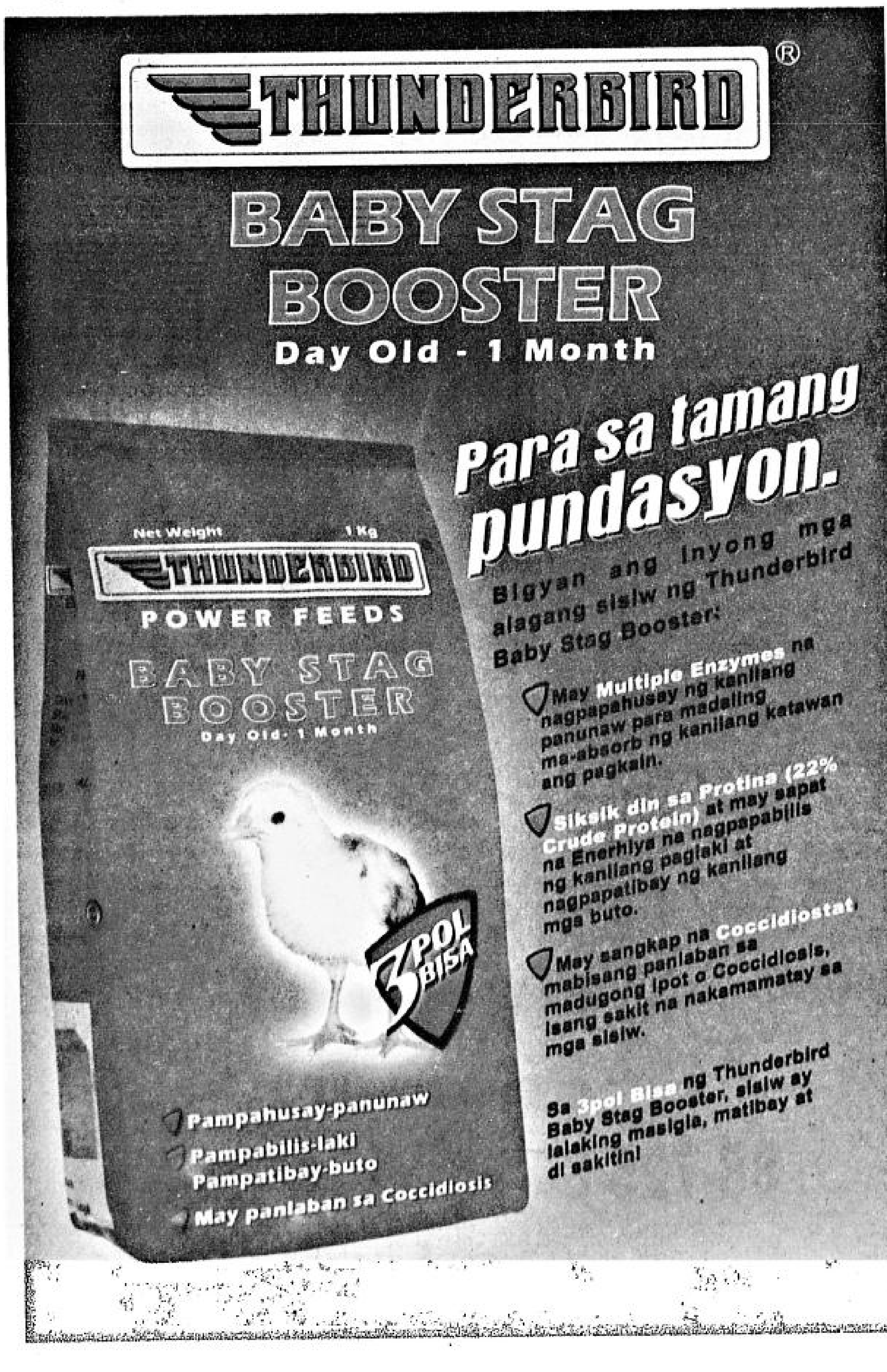
The members of the national team to the World Chess Olympiad, including Grandmasters Eugene Torre and Joey Antonio and GM-elect Mark Paragua, will banner different teams in the event that stakes P100,000 for the champions.

National Chess Federation of the Philippines president Go Teng Kok said each team may field four regular players and one alternate, including two titled players.

The tournament is held in cooperation with the Department of Interior and Local Government and hosted by the city government of Tagaytay headed by Mayor Abraham "Bambol" Tolentino.

Cash prizes also include P60,000 for the runner-up team, P40,000 for the third placer.

For inquiries, call project director Willie Abalos at 0918-6523265. *Marlon Bernardino, Contributor*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May panlaban sa Coccidiosis

JINKY Mariano (left) of Team OMBC flicks a serve while partner Tess Marcelo looks on during the opening game Saturday of the first Platinum Cup at West Drive badminton courts in Pasig City. RYAN LIM

PLATINUM CUP

Players' Best not good enough for Valle Verde

VALLE Verde swept Players' Best in two games yesterday and gained the right to represent the East Area in the Battle of the Courts: National Inter-Club Platinum Cup at the West Drive Badminton Club in Pasig.

Valle Verde and Players' Best earlier advanced to the finals with similar 2-1 wins at the expense of Myan's and Badminton Gold, respectively.

Valle Verde's Cherry Go Tian and Elizabeth Ng outlasted Myan's Ivy Silva and Jane Aurelo, 15-11, 15-1, in the women's doubles.

Valle Verde then clinched its second win through former tennis standout Randy Villanueva and Jofer Velez, who overwhelmed John Rivera and Zeo Pulido, 15-2, 15-6, in the men's doubles.

Lilibeth Pascual and Julie Kagalingan scored Players' Best first victory at the expense of Mariejoy Kawpeng and Chiqui Villanueva, 15-11, 15-9, in the women's doubles.

Israel Quimson and Louie Trinidad followed it up with a 15-12, 15-9 win over Allan Lavarro and Nino Caruncho in the men's doubles.

Assured of a victory, Valle Verde and Player's Best waived their matches in the mixed doubles category of the event presented by Globe Platinum and INQUIRER BADMINTON.

"We did a lot of scouting and our team spirit carried us through. We vow to train harder in the national finals," said Players' Best team captain Jeremy Pampolina.

The grand finals is set on Nov. 20-21 at the Market! Market! at Fort Bonifacio.

The overall champion will win a holiday trip to Bangkok, Thailand, with each member receiving 20,000 Mabuhay Miles credit from Philippine Airlines.

Other tournament and raffle prizes include phones from Globe Platinum, top-of-the-line items from Mizuno and premium sports watches from L Timestudio.

The event's major sponsors are Philippine Airlines, Mizuno and L Timestudio. Nestlé is the official drink sponsor, Gerflor Taraflex the official mat sponsor and Gosen the official shuttlecock.

Standings

Group A: Valle Verde 5-0, Players' Best 3-2, Hillscrest 3-2, West Drive 2-3, Feather Alley 2-3, Shuttle's Best-C-5 0-5.

Group B: Badminton Gold 5-1, Myan's 5-1, Old Market, 4-2, Greenpark BC 3-3, Badminton Buddies 2-4, Shuttle's Best-RB 2-4.

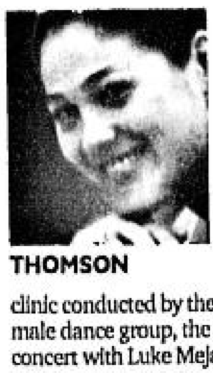
Akiko, Barredo in Globe fora

TWO-TIME Olympian and television host Gillian Akiko Thomson will be the resource speaker in the Globe gentxt School Trip Leadership Forum to be held at the St. Paul's College of Ilocos Sur in Vigan City on Oct. 14.

Akiko also spoke in the Iligan and Naga legs of the 14-city campus tour organized by Globe gentxt as its contribution in preparing the youth in their future role in nation-building.

Over at the Wesleyan University of the Philippines in Cabanatuan City, Commissioner Michael Barredo of the Philippine Sports Commission will be the resource speaker in a similar Leadership Forum tomorrow.

Barredo is also chair of the International Blind Sports Association for Asia.


THOMSON

Both Thomson and Barredo will share their experiences and struggles with students during the two fora.

The activities also include a two-day hip hop, street dancing clinic conducted by the country's topnotch all-male dance group, the Manoeuvres, and a free concert with Luke Mejares and the Velcro Band.

E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

Entertainment Metro /A2

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Text us your feedback/name/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Editor Louie C. Camino

Jay-R: I don't think I'm sexy /A40

Edu: Yes, Ai Ai and I went out on a date

Comic admits she received a necklace from her 'suitor'

By Marinel R. Cruz

"I WAS in a meeting," Edu (top) says, explaining why he didn't answer the call from Ai Ai.

ACTOR and Optical Media Board Chair Edu Manzano, who is said to be wooing Ai Ai de las Alas, admitted he went out with the comedian last week.

"But we were with Arnel Ignacio, who came to the ABS-CBN studio with Ai Ai, and my costars Aga (Muhlach) and Bayani (Agbayani)," Edu told INQUIRER Entertainment in a telephone interview last week. "She had just finished her therapy that night when they arrived at the ABS-CBN studio. After my taping (for 'Okay Fine Whatever'), we went out to have some *merienda*."

Edu also explained why he did not answer his cell phone when Ai Ai called after a grenade was found in her Quezon City house on Oct. 1, a Friday.

"I was in a meeting at that time, and my cell phone was on silent mode," Edu told INQUIRER Entertainment. "I was discussing with the members of OMB details of the raid we conducted last Sunday.

"When we had a break in the discussion, I immediately called Ai Ai," Edu added. "She said everything was okay and that she had already talked with Arnel about the grenade. I also sent people to her house that night."

Ai Ai earlier told INQUIRER Entertainment she did not want to put Edu in a "bad spot" by reacting to write-ups about the two of them. But she admitted that Edu was the first person she called when she learned that a live grenade had been found in her house.

"Edu did not pick up the phone, so I called Arnel instead," Ai Ai had recounted. "I asked Arnel to help me contact a SWAT team to check out the grenade."

Edu and Ai Ai are co-hosts on the noontime variety show "MTB: Ang Saya-saya."

Edu said Ai Ai's therapy is for an injury she suffered while playing badminton.

According to talk in show biz circles, Edu is courting Ai Ai. In an interview on "The Buzz" last Sunday, Ai Ai admitted she received a necklace from Edu.

Rumor also said Edu's ex-girlfriend, "Eat Bulaga!" host Alicia Meyer, was hospitalized after drinking tequila and sleeping pills because she got depressed over stories linking Edu to other women.

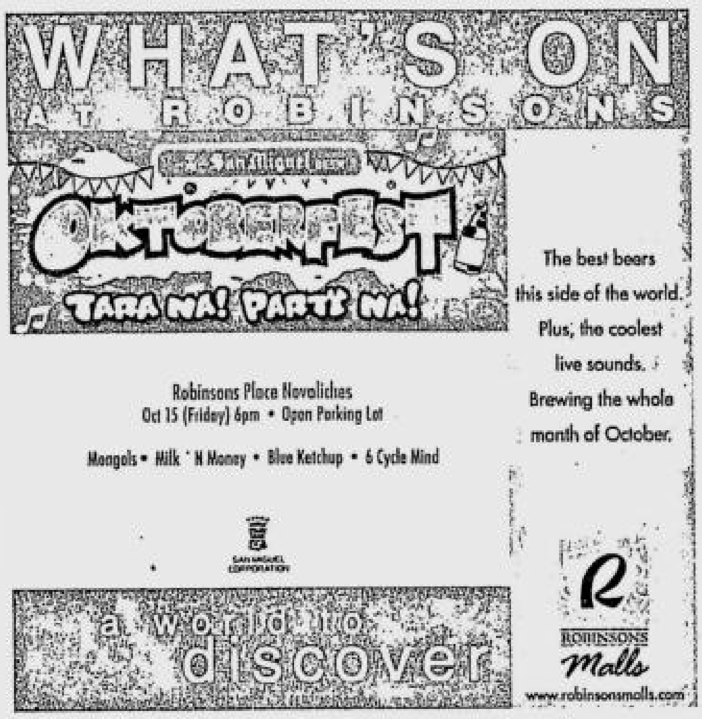
"I just talked with her last night and she never mentioned anything about that," Edu said of Alicia last Tuesday. "I'm going to call her right away."

Last Oct. 3, OMB agents raided the Makati Cinema Square on Chino Roces Avenue in Makati, as well as Carriedo and Raon in Sta. Cruz, Manila, and seized P10 million worth of pirated video compact discs (VCDs) and digital video discs (DVDs).

They confiscated a total of 100,000 pirated discs that day, the OMB chief said.

"Sadly, there was still a significant number of pornographic discs confis-

EDU A34



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Too much of a good thing

FILIPINO chanteuses are proud of their ability to "make *birit*" or to belt out songs with maximum range and local power. Trouble is, when you get too much of a good thing, it becomes a liability—as well as a real strain on the singers' vocal cords and the listeners' eardrums.

That's what belting and *birit* have degenerated to in these parts, no thanks to their prime exponents, like **Regine Velasquez, Dulce, Sarah Geronimo** and **Sheryn Regis**.

Fact is, however, the fault is not so much in our singing stars' readiness to display and belabor their power, as it is in Filipino music lovers' insistence that their favorite singers practically kill themselves to make an impression on the local audience's benumbed and unsubtle sensibilities.

This really is none of our business, except for the fact that it makes the local scene so strident and trying-hard. It also robs us of variety, contrast, insightful interpretation, and all of the niceties that make music such a beautiful, empathetic expression of our thoughts and feelings.

When female singers belt one song after another at peak volume because that's what their listeners expect and even demand, we get overwhelmed and eventually sated with all that tuneful noise.

How much better it would be if a singer belts one number, then follows up with an intimate song for contrast, and goes on to a different kind of beat, before going back to *birit* mode.

Some years ago, we suggested to Dulce that she opt for this more varied, subtle and less relentless approach. To her credit, Dulce, one of our most celebrated belters, tried it out, and her range

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

as a performer increased.

But the Regines and the Sarahs may not be that easy to convince. After all, they've built their careers on sheer lung power, and thus may hesitate to give up their advantage.

Even if they are predisposed to consider more varied and less musically hard-sell options, their fans may turn out to be less amenable to adjusting the way they get their musical kicks.

But they should really give it a go, so they can catch up with the rest of the musical world, and make musical interpretation a less stressful and more aesthetically rewarding endeavor for the singing stars they profess to adulate and love.

And they should do it real soon, because the *birit* trend is well on its way to degenerating into a plague.

Many younger singers are now being given the crazy notion that the only way they'll make it as singing stars in these parts is by going full-throttle the *birit* way—with a vengeance.

Indeed, there are many singing tilts on TV, including one unsubtly titled "Birit Queen," that stress volume and high notes above all else. Thus, a whole new generation of our chanteuses is being led down the wrong musical road, to everyone's loss and dismay.

'Mythbusters'

EVERY Friday this month at 8 p.m., Discovery Channel telecasts "Mythbusters," a series that tests a multitude of myths, with the hosts even putting their own bodies on the line to unearth the truth behind the legends.

For instance, legend has it that cola can do much more than quench thirst.

Hosts **Adam** and **Jamie** try to find out if in fact the popular soda can remove bloodstains, polish chrome, dissolve a nail, remove a grease stain from clothing, or act as a spermicide.

Also: Can someone pumping gas at a service station set off an explosion by using a cell phone? Jamie and Adam fill their blast chamber with gasoline fumes and a ringing cell phone, then step back and wait for the fireworks.

Link Center for the Deaf

LEARN the language of the hands at Link Center for the Deaf, a non-profit organization whose primary aim is to promote awareness of the deaf to the mainstream of Philippine society.

The center's sign language program provides participants with added knowledge about deafness, skills and opportunities for personal growth through interaction with deaf students. Call 426-0382.

'Covers'

REGINE Velasquez's "Covers" album hit stores on Oct. 10. The compilation is made up of cover versions of songs popularized by other artists.

Cuts include "Each Day With You," first recorded by **Martin Nievera**, "Hang On" and "'Di Bale Na Lang" by **Gary Valenciano**, "Minsan Lang Kitang Iibigin" by **Ariel Rivera**," "Araw Gabi" by **Nony Zuñiga**, "Forevermore" by Side A, "Paalam" by **Basil Valdez**, "Perfect" by True Faith," "Mahal na Mahal Kita" by **Archie D**, and "Ang Aking Awitin" by **Bong Gabriel**.

Regine performs at the Podium on Oct. 24, presented by Astroplus.

"BIRIT" QUEEN Regine Velasquez is the prime exponent of belting and "birit."

'Digital LG Challenge'

THE MUCH-AWAITED War of the Wizards is only a few episodes away. This month, over 200 contenders battle it out for the final seven slots in the forthcoming Grand Wizard episode of GMA 7's "Digital LG Challenge."

Other schools competing: Oct. 17, St. Columban College and Cainta Catholic School. Oct. 24, Angelicum College and St.. John Hill Academy. And Oct. 31, Lakandula High School and Camp Crame High School.

Arceo clan reunion

THE ARCEO clan will have its reunion on Oct. 16 and 17 at the covered court of St. Bridget's College in Batangas City. Clan members here and abroad who are doctors and nurses will conduct a medical mission at the Parish Hall, Basilica grounds, on Oct. 17.

Activities on Oct. 17: 10 a.m. Mass, musical program, lunch games, photo opportunities, and snacks. Registration starts at 8 a.m. The book "Arceo Generations: A Family Tree," edited by **Cesar Sol Arceo**, will be revised, as family data is made available during the reunion.

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Edu: Yes, Ai Ai and I…

From page A33

cated," Edu added.

"But the number of pirated DVDs decreased and most of the VCDs were replicated only through burners."

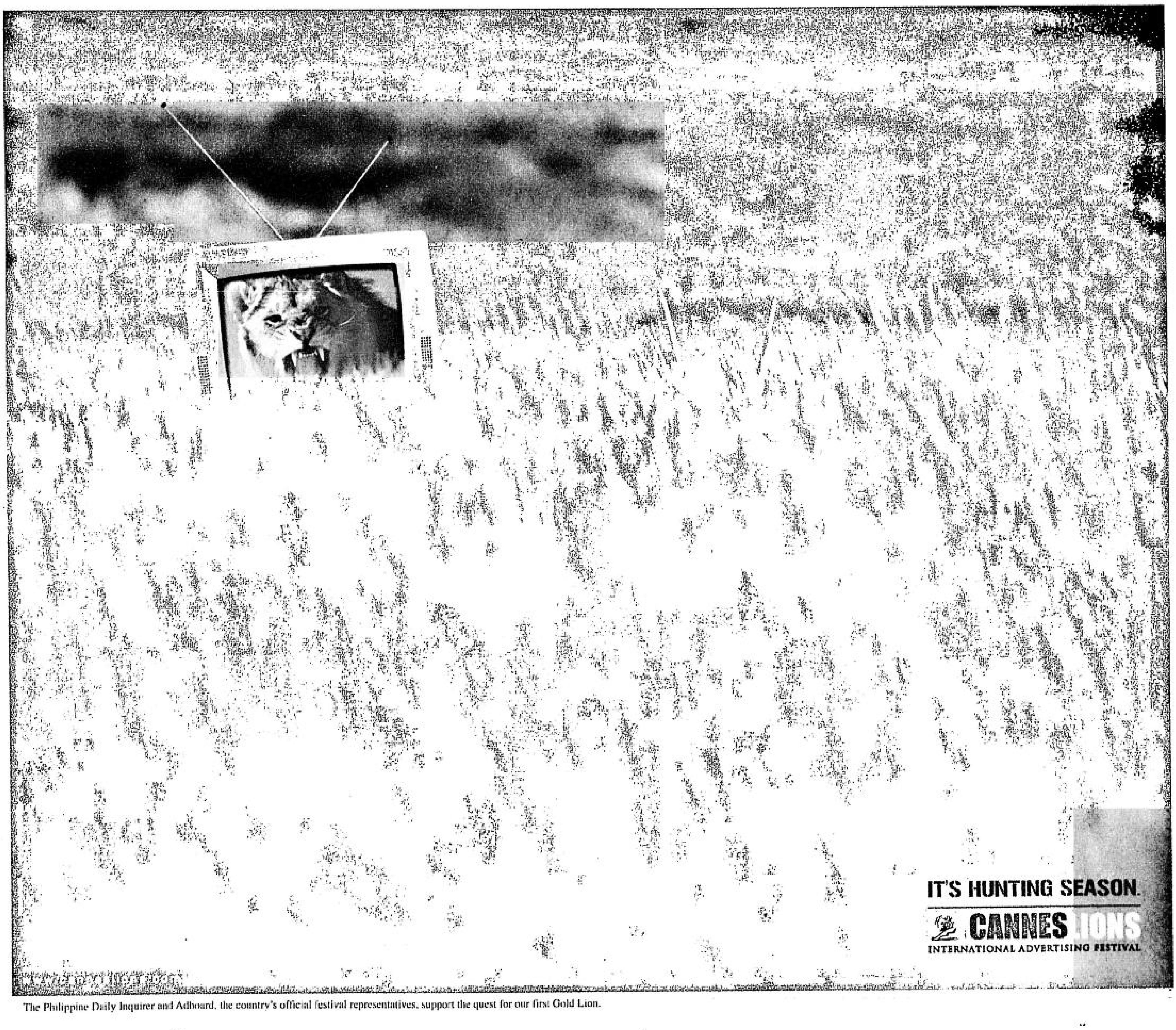
He said no untoward incidents happened during the raids, unlike during a raid last month at the Virra Mall in Greenhills, where seven persons were injured, including six agents of the OMB.

"We're being very careful this time," he said. "We don't want anything like that to happen again."

Last month, two planes carrying pirated materials were intercepted at the Davao International Airport in the South, he said.

"We are now considering putting up a satellite office in Davao," he said.

"This way, we can also watch over the ports in General Santos and Cotabato."



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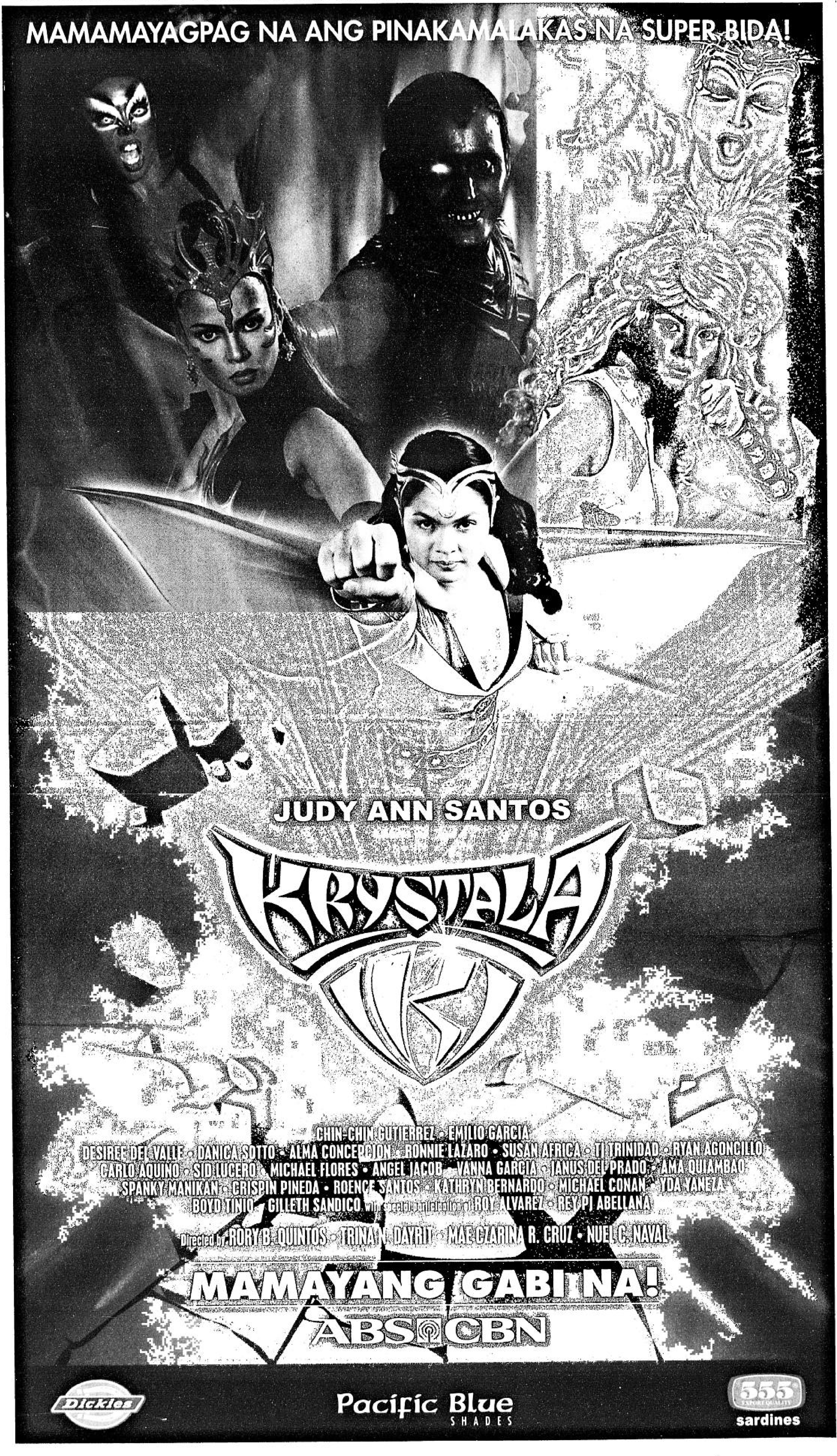

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JUDY ANN SANTOS

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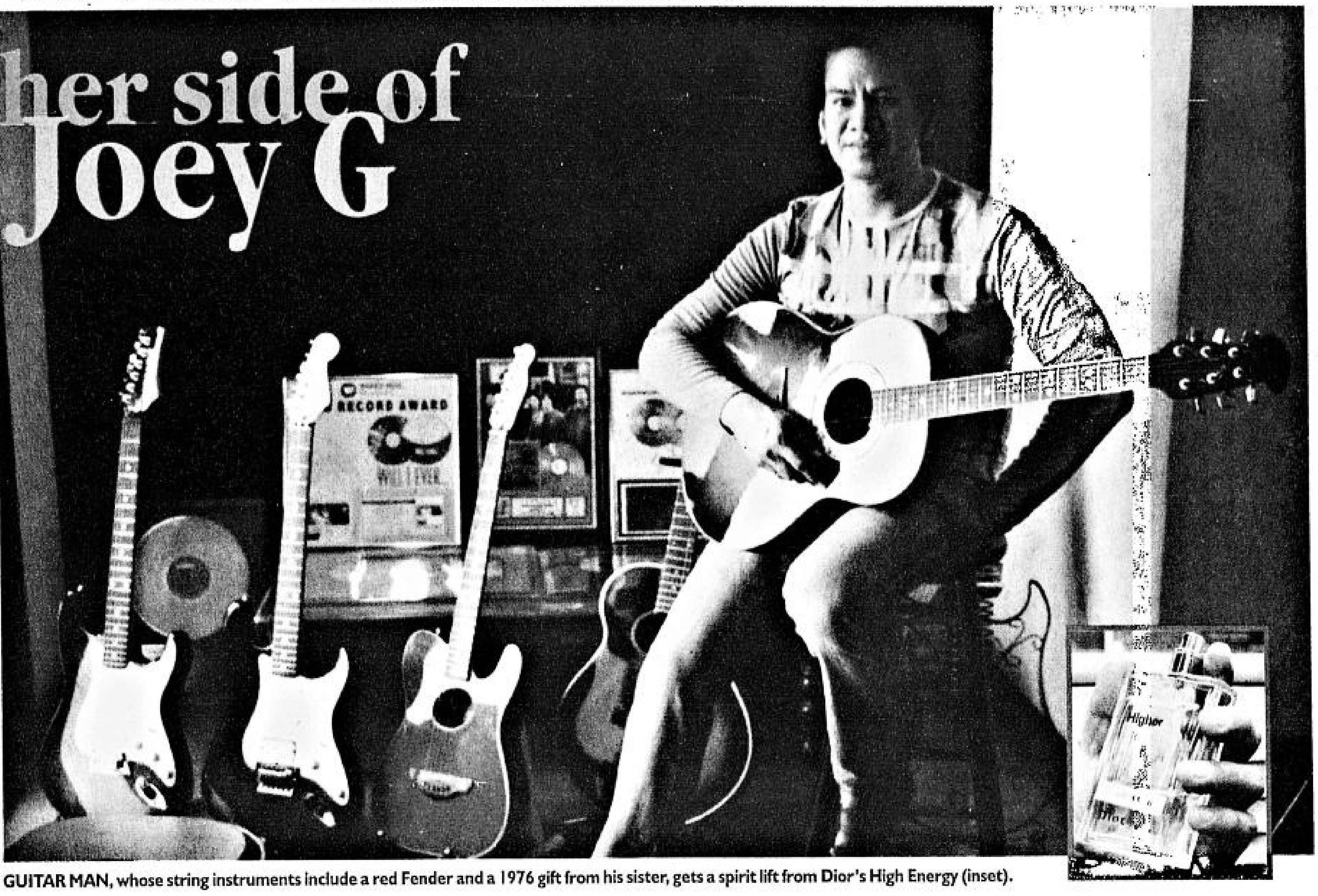
The other side of Side A's Joey G

By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by Romy Homilada



GUITAR MAN, whose string instruments include a red Fender and a 1976 gift from his sister, gets a spirit lift from Dior's High Energy (inset).

TOPS. "For casual wear, I wear tight-fitting shirts, like these Fubu shirts. I also like cotton sleeveless shirts, but I can't wear them during gigs. *Bawal.*

"This long-sleeve shirt is a gift from my manager, Wyngard Tracy. It's in orange, green, yellow, etc. It's best paired with jeans.

"You won't see me wearing this polo shirt when I'm out on the street. This is just for shows. I wore this in my first-ever concert for Crossover in 2002. I bought it for that particular event."

Shoes. "I really love shoes, especially boots. I first wore this pair in my first solo concert. I bought this at Homme at Shangri-la. I feel confident when I wear it onstage.

"I like pointed boots because they're in fashion now.

"For shows, I have blue suede shoes. I bought them in the States. I like shopping when I go out of the country.

"These New Balance rubber shoes are my favorite for workout. The band's sports doctor prescribed these. He said rubber shoes have to match the shape of your feet. They come in a series, mine is the ninth, so it has the number 09 on the back."

Suits. "I wore this black suit from Homme when I performed at the WWF (World Wildlife Foundation) fund-raising concert. I'm not sure, but I think it's made of silk. The undergarment is chiffon."

Jackets. "Most of our tours in the US are scheduled during the winter. I always use my Armani leather jacket. It's really warm. I like its tapered look, it makes me look slim. It's great especially when you don't want to bring too many jackets on your trip."

Jeans. "I like wearing jeans a lot. Nowadays, I'm into the flared types. They're also in fashion now. I also like the fabric of this flared pair from Zara because it's soft. I wear baggy pants, especially when I go to the mall. I match them with comfy rubber shoes. But for shows, I go for the flashy ones like these red corduroy jeans from Diesel. You won't see me wearing this to the mall, though."

Belts. "I buy belts depending on how good they look with my jeans or pants. I have lots of belts, but most of them are in storage now. I hardly use them anymore. I feel uncomfortable when I wear one, especially when playing the guitar. *Sumasabit.*"

Perfumes. "Nowadays, I'm into Higher Energy by Dior. I'm very particular with scents. I like them a bit woody (laughs). Higher Energy is very light. It's like I've just stepped out of the bath. This is actually my first bottle. I used to wear Bulgari Extreme."

Sleepwear. "I recently bought a couple of boxer shorts from Joe Boxer. I have Spiderman and Sponge Bob boxers. Not only are they comfortable, they're also cute. For tops, I wear cotton *sandos*. I don't like wearing pajamas because they make me itch sometimes, and sort of restrict my movement."

Gym outfits. "This black pair of Marks and Spencer jogging pants is a favorite. I buy branded items like this because I know I can use them for a long time. I've been using this pair of jogging pants for years but it still looks okay. It has several layers of fabric, so it really makes me sweat."

Bags. "This black sling bag is the newest bag my wife bought me. I like it because it's very handy. Normally, it contains my make-up and other small items I need for shows."

Musical instruments. "My newest find is this red electric guitar from Fender. Fender released only a limited number of units. I think there are only 30 of this in the States. The sound, color and design are all good. First-time buyers should make sure the sound is good, the neck is comfortable to hold, and the gauges are correct.

"I still keep the Yamaha acoustic guitar I got as a gift in 1976. My sister gave it to me. I take care of my things really well. I had it repaired recently. I bought my first guitar in 1987.

"The grand piano was one of the things I inherited from my father. I have just had it restored. Some of the wood pieces here are already new. It still works."

Joey Generoso, lead vocalist of Side A, one of the most sought-after bands in the country, says he actually spends more time with his family than a father with an 8-hour job does.

"A normal gig only lasts for about two hours," says the band man popularly known as Joey G. "I don't have to leave my work place to go to gimmicks because my gigs are my gimmicks. My schedule becomes hectic only when the group has a major concert or when we're recording our album."

Joey G and his wife Girlie had been going steady for nine years before they decided to get married on Dec. 18, 1990. They now have two kids—Czarina, 12, and Jose Miguel, 9.

"My wife is very supportive," Joey G tells INQUIRER Entertainment in an interview at the three-story Generoso home in Fairview, Quezon City. "My kids understand my work."

"He's a family man," Girlie says of her husband. "He really makes time for the kids. When he comes home from his gigs at night, the first thing he does is check on the kids. Sometimes, he helps them with their assignments if I don't have time.

"He always tells me, 'we should have time for us, *hindi puro sa kids.*' That's why we always go out on dates or play badminton together."

Joey grew up in a family of musicians. When he decided to study music in college, his parents were very supportive. "My dad's a musician, too," he shares. "Unlike other dads, he allowed me to take up music because he understood. That's why if my kids want to pursue the same career, I will also support them."

He says both Czarina and Jose Miguel are showing interest in playing the piano and the guitar. "They also sing, like their mom, who used to be a choir member in high school," he says.

Joey G and his band mates Naldy Gonzales (musical director, keyboardist), Kelly Badon (lead guitas), Joey Benin (bass guitar) and Ernie · Severino (drums) are especially busy in November and December, says Girlie.

"We never get to celebrate our wedding anniversary on time because the band is always busy," says Girlie, adding that her husband gifted her with a brand new car a few months ago.

"We have a show in Hong Kong on Dec. 18, if things go as planned," says Joey. "I'll take her along so she can go shopping."

From November to December, Side A is scheduled to perform at the Lisner Auditorium in Washington DC; the All Sports Center in Las Vegas; the Veteran Memorial Auditorium in Columbus, Ohio; and the Humble Civic Center in Houston, Texas.

The group performs regularly at Surburbia in Malate every Monday and at Tavern on the Square in Makati every Wednesday.

"I'm like Joey's assistant," says Girlie. "He asks me where his things are. When he needs a haircut or a new pair of shoes, I tell him. He is actually the vainest in the group."

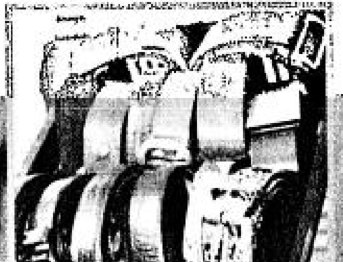
Joey and Girlie share a walk-in closet connected to the master bedroom on the second floor of their home. Girlie arranged Joey's things for the INQUIRER Entertainment visit "so he'll know where to find his favorite stuff."

"What we wear during special shows is different from what we wear during our regular gigs," Joey explains. "They are flashier than those for regular gigs, where we're allowed to wear jeans and polo shirts.

"We can't be too casual, though. T-shirts, cotton sleeveless shirts and rubber shoes are not allowed."

When he goes out with his family or visits his Blue Angel water refilling station on Regalado Avenue, he prefers to wear his most comfy outfit, like the dri-fit Fubu shirts and the New Balance rubber shoes his "sports doctor" especially prescribed for him.

THE BELTER hardly uses belts now because they get in the way of his guitar-playing.



BRRR! For when it's really cold, as in the US, this Armani jacket

GIRLIE'S GIFT, the sling bag from his wife

WYNGARD'S COLORS, the shirt from his manager

HOMME for the music man

RESTORED PIANO goes well with dri-fit Fubu shirt.

UP THE DOWN staircase, the band singer is also a devoted family man.

Raising Kate Hudson

By Janet Susan R. Nepales
LA Correspondent

COOL MOM Kate Hudson

IN "RAISING Helen," she gets friendship and advice from John Corbett.

LOS ANGELES—The change in Kate Hudson is very obvious.

Two years ago, when we interviewed Hudson for her box-office hit "How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days" with Matthew McConaughey, she was a sudden gush of excess energy, full of excitement and liveliness.

Full of sunshine, optimism and joie de vivre, Hudson was the ultimate charmer whose smile warmed the room the minute she walked in. She was impeccably dressed that time in a slinky, spaghetti-strapped, flaming red Alberta Ferretti mini dress with matching sexy Dior slip-on shoes.

Today, two years later, the Hollywood princess, daughter of famous parents Goldie Hawn and long-time partner Kurt Russell (actually her stepdad but he has been "Pa" to her all these years), has tied her blonde locks in a pony tail, and is donning a simple pink top with an all-white ensemble of pants and jacket.

There is an air of seriousness and simplicity about her as she nurses a cup of hot tea and tucks one leg under the other when she sits beside us this breezy afternoon at the Casa del Mar hotel in Santa Monica. This time around, the Golden Girl looked more like a tired young wife and mother from Hollywood.

Shouting 'action!'

She does not speak like the livewire that she was two years ago. Now, at 25, married for four years to her rocker husband, Chris Robinson, and mother to 10-month-old Ryder, Hudson appears much calmer, wiser and more confident. Still very much down-to-earth and open, she now exudes this "normalness" that usually is not seen especially among Hollywood royalty.

For one who practically grew up in the studios, Hudson does not have the bratty air of a celebrity child.

"I have known Kate since she was a kid and she used to sit on my lap and yell 'action,'" recalls Garry Marshall ("Pretty Woman," "Princess Diaries," "Runaway Bride") who directs Hudson in her new romantic-comedy, "Raising Helen." "Now, when Kate yells action with me, the circles of life continue."

Hudson, who won a Golden Globe Award and an Academy Award nomination for her role in Cameron Crowe's celebrated semi-autobiographical movie, "Almost Famous," is the lead in the Marshall flick that is about the story of top fashion model agent Helen Harris (Hudson), who suddenly finds herself as the guardian of a nephew and two nieces. The party-loving, club-hopping fashionista is shocked about her new mom role. Helen's older married sister, Jenny Portman (Joan Cusack), feels the three kids should have been left in her care instead.

The transformation from the freedom-loving career girl to super surrogate mom is made more complicated when Helen meets the handsome young pastor and principal of the kids' school, Dan Parker (John Corbett), whom she befriends and asks for advice.

Greatest asset

"Kate is a natural on the set," continues Marshall who talks as if he were Hudson's doting grandpa (and he has the right). "I don't need to teach her anything because she instinctively knows already what to do. She has been on the set all her life that everything comes out naturally for her. She always has that special touch that makes the scene more realistic. I am glad she has pursued this ca-

RAISING/ A38

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Raising Kate Hudson

From page A37

reer because she is very talented."

Hudson admits she really did not prepare much for the role because "I got my inspiration already from my own family. I am very close to my parents and I think I have the coolest parents in the world. They have always taught me to find humor in everything, even during the rough times, and true indeed, this has become my greatest asset."

Hudson admits that she enjoys being a wife to former Black Crowes band member . Chris Robinson and mother to Ryder. "Chris is one person whom people may not understand but he is the most thoughtful, sensitive and caring person I have ever known," Hudson gushes as she tosses her head for emphasis. "He does not mind changing diapers or. taking care of Ryder. He wakes up in the middle of the night as well to help. He loves being a daddy."

Robinson, who has a new band called the New Earth Mud, is a tall, rugged, lanky, bearded, quiet guy who is a complete opposite of the more fashionable and sociable Hudson. His spontaneity, sincerity and confidence in himself, according to Hudson, are some of the traits that made the Hollywood princess attracted to him.

Let men be men

On Hudson's 25th birthday, Robinson surprised her with a birthday bash at the Funky Butt bar and restaurant in New Orleans where Hudson was filming her next movie, "Skeleton Key."

"He even had a horse-drawn carriage take us to the restaurant and when we arrived, my friends and some of my co-workers were already there," Hudson narrates, her eyes glowing. "He even hired a jazz band and jammed with them."

Very close to her mom, Goldie Hawn, Hudson reveals, "One thing my mother always told me was to let men be men," says Hudson. "She said they should always feel that they are the ones wearing the pants in the house and to respect and love each other always. My mom adds that we should always find time for ourselves to have fun. I know she does this, too, since she is a very busy lady but still, she and my Pa (Kurt Russell) always find time to enjoy themselves."

As a new mom, Hudson loves to cuddle up to her baby and breastfeed him as long as she can. "I am not the kind of celebrity mom who will leave everything to the nanny," she says. "I would like my son Ryder to be as close to me as I am to my own mother."

And then she adds with a smile, "I hope, one day, he would also think I am a 'cool' mom."

Chris Walken leaves his mark

LOS ANGELES—Actor Christopher Walken made an impression on Hollywood as he left his hand and footprints at the fabled Grauman's Chinese Theater.

"This is a thrill, a big day for me," Walken said at Friday's ceremony. "I'm not sure how I arrived at this place today, but one sure thing: I've been lucky. Thank you for this day."

The 61-year-old Oscar winner said he stamped prints of dancing shoes into the theater's cement, recalling his childhood training as a dancer.

"These are my favorite shoes," Walken said. Though the dancing shoes were crusted with cement, Walken joked that he might hang them off his car's rearview mirror.

Walken left his imprints on the forecourt of the lavish Chinese-style movie palace where Tinseltown's top stars have made their mark since the days of silent actors Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks in 1927.

Celebrities from Marilyn Monroe to Betty Davis, Sylvester Stallone and Donald Duck have all plunged their hands and feet into a square of wet cement to ensure they are enshrined in Hollywood for posterity.

The ceremony coincided with the opening of Walken's latest film, "Around the Bend," about four generations of men in a broken family who reunite. Early chatter said the role could win him another Oscar nomination.

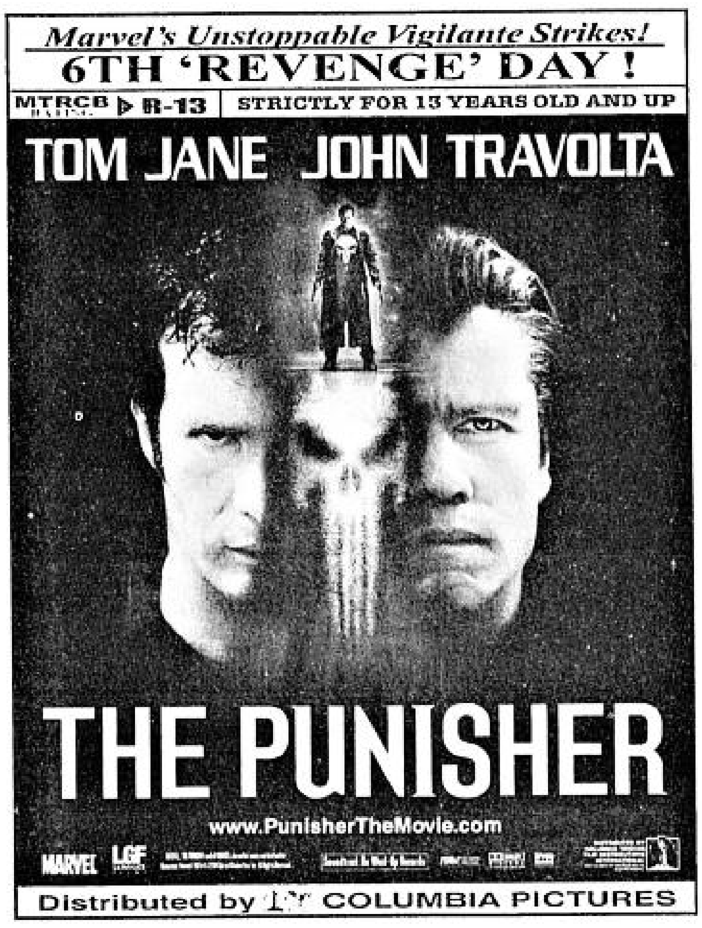
Walken broke into show business as a song and dance man. His role in Michael Cimino's "The Deer Hunter" (1978) as a Vietnam veteran earned him an Academy Award for best supporting actor.

He also was nominated for a 2002 Oscar for his performance in Steven Spielberg's "Catch Me If You Can."

Overall, he's starred in more than 50 films, including "Pulp Fiction," "Biloxi Blues," "Pennies from Heaven," "Man on Fire," and "Annie Hall."

The first footprints at Grauman's Chinese Theater were made by Norma Talmadge in 1927.

Legend says she accidentally stepped in wet concrete outside the building. *AFP, AP*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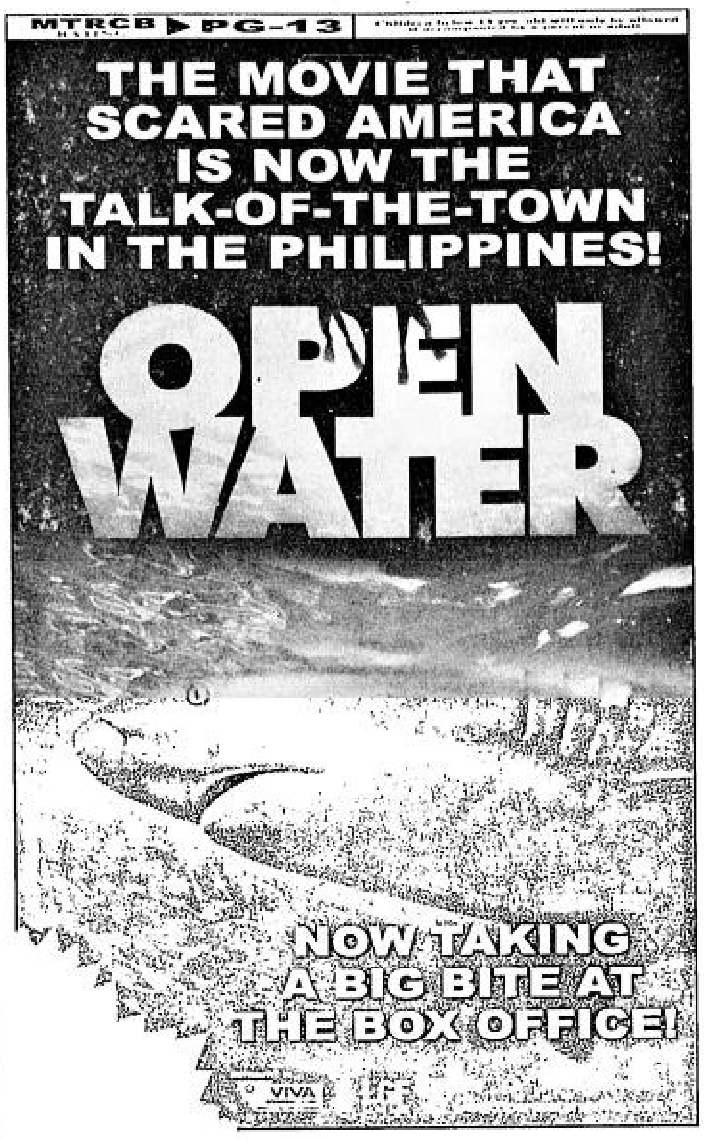
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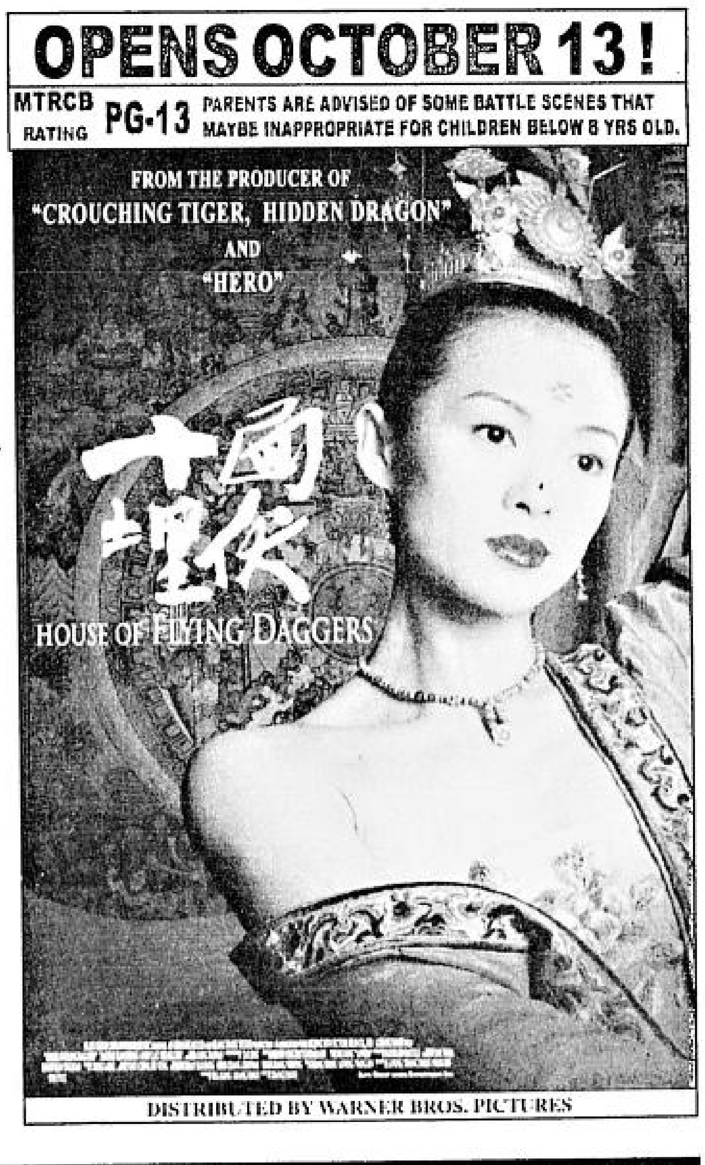
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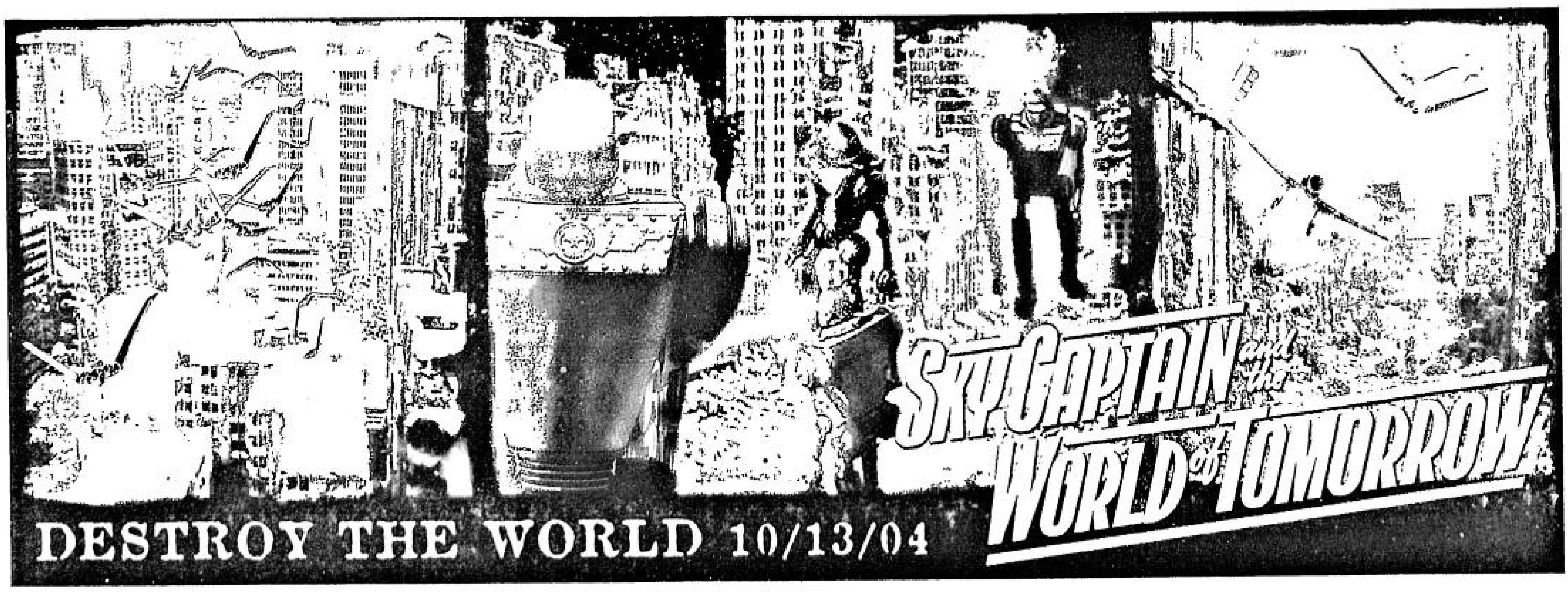
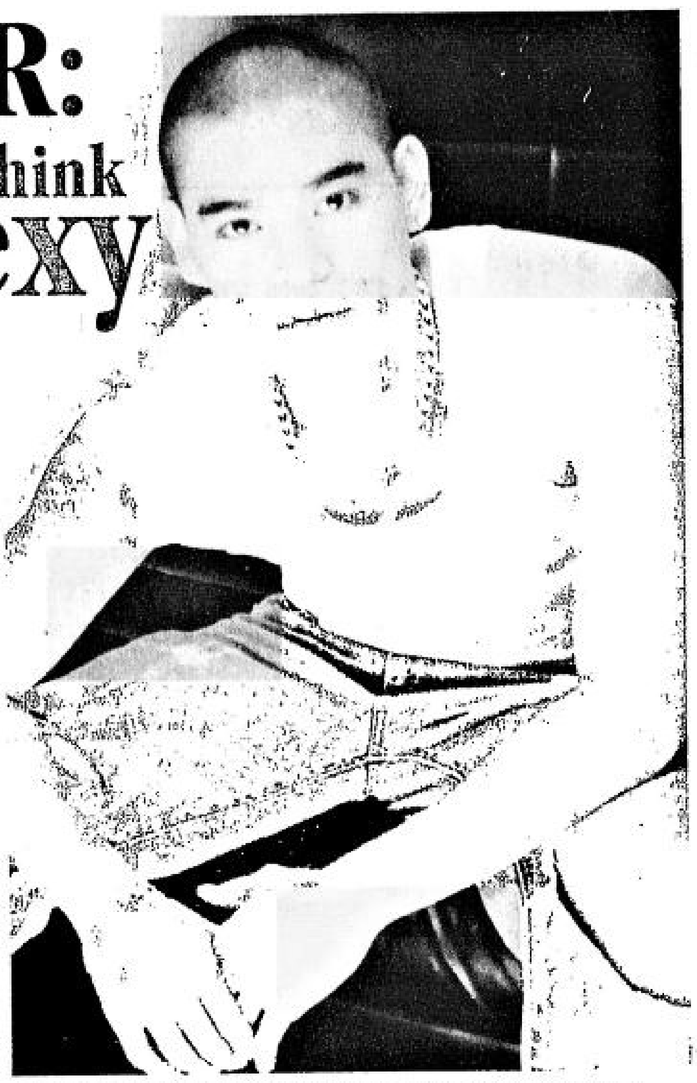

SKY CAPTAIN and the WORLD of TOMORROW
DESTROY THE WORLD 10/13/04

Jay-R: I don't think I'm sexy

From page A40



AT HOME in the US, he spoke Filipino at home, ate "ampalaya," washed dishes and swept the floor.

tive to both opportunities for him to show his more daring side—the magazine centerfold and the Bench underwear show—but he feels rather removed from the sex symbol label.

"*Medyo payat po ako*," he says in Filipino fluently. "*Buti sana* if I had muscles and stuff. I need to work out more. I don't think I'm sexy. *Nahihiya rin po ako magtanggal (ng damit)*. It's easier for me if I'm wearing my clothes. But everyone seems to like it."

It may be surprising to some that the singer, whose real name is Gaudencio Aquino Sillona III, grew up in Los Angeles but speaks and sings Filipino well. This has proven very advantageous for him in his year and a half in local show biz.

"I was born and raised there," he says. "*Sa bahay*, Filipino culture. *Sa labas*, American culture with friends, at school, gimmicks. *Sa bahay talaga*, Tagalog, we use *po at opo, hindi nawawala ang ampalaya sa ulam. Ako ang naghuhugas ng pinggan, nagwawalis, ganoon.*"

Musical parents

Growing up in a music-loving household has allowed Jay-R to pursue performing at a younger age, when his potential as a singing and dancing star was noticed by an aunt who was visiting L.A., seasoned choreographer Geleen Eugenio.

"I had my own equipment," says Jay-R. "I produce my own music. But there came an opportunity when Tita Geleen told me she could give me a record deal and a network deal, so I accepted."

Jay-R, the youngest of four kids, used to emulate idols Stevie Wonder, Luther Vandross, Gary V and Brian McKnight. "But mostly, *pamilya ko talaga. 'Yung ate ko*, especially. She's abroad, finishing her jazz album. Most nights, my daddy plays the piano, and my mommy sings. They do it for, like, hours. *Natutulog na kami, kumakanta pa sila!*"

His parents, sister and two young nieces were his special guests in his Sept. 25 concert, "Gameface Reload," at the Folk Arts Theater, alongside star celebs Regine Velasquez, Ai Ai delas Alas and Kyla. Five days after the concert, his family left to go back to various obligations abroad.

Jay-R's tight work schedule leaves him very little time for rest periods and relationships, he says. He admits to having had three ex-girlfriends in the US, but none here, so far.

"*Wala po akong* girlfriend," he says, briefly pauses, and gamely adds, "*Wala ring* boyfriend."

When asked if he found someone whom he might be interested in dating, he deadpanned, "*Si Ate* Glow," referring to a gay impersonator.

Fans who pinch

And Filipino fans have been very appreciative of him. He especially feels touched when strangers do heartfelt renditions of his songs "Bakit Pa Ba?" and "Kung Mahal Mo Siya." Various product endorsements have also made him easily recognizable, with his posters, print ads and gigantic billboards seen practically everywhere in the metropolis.

Sales of his debut album "Gameface" from Universal Records have gone platinum, and a follow-up effort will be released by Christmas.

"After shows, fans are pretty wild," he says. "They pinch! It's hard for me to get through crowds. *Dapat may naghahawi*. But in malls, they just want pictures or autographs, they don't rush me or anything. I have to stop, maybe for about two minutes at a time, and then I walk again."

The current workload, however, is something he takes seriously, which he says isn't that different from his past work abroad. He took up a year of computer engineering at DeVry University, but dropped out to pursue performing when the opportunities beckoned.

He was in two groups in the US: The Howlers, which sang Top 40 songs at clubs, weddings and corporate events; and First Impression, an a cappella group that toured colleges.

"I also did recordings," he says. "I sang in shows. I sold my own CD. Newspapers and magazines would interview me about my work.

"The only difference is," he adds, "I have fans here."

Mraz on live CD

PEOPLE screamed while he sang "The Remedy" and they sang along to his "Sleep All Day" when Jason Mraz performed in a sold-out concert in Manila last May.

Now, re-live those moments with the singer-songwriter's live CD, "Tonight, Not Again: Jason Mraz Live at the Eagles Ballroom." Recorded in Milwaukee, the live album captures the curbside prophet's full concert and also features previously unreleased songs such as "1,000 Things," "Not so Usual," "No Doubling Back" and "Common Pleasure."

The 27-year-old Mraz, gifted with a high, pure voice, was at his charismatic best during the concert.

"Tonight, Not Again: Jason Mraz Live at the Eagles Ballroom" is also on film, packed with behind-the-scenes segments of Mraz's tours of the US, Europe and Japan on the DVD release available soon.

ANGELINA JOLIE, JUDE LAW AND GWYNETH PALTROW

SKY CAPTAIN AND THE WORLD OF TOMORROW

No. 1 film in America

The first film in motion picture history to utilize more than 2,000 special FX shots, **"Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow"** is one of the most startling and stunning movies of the year.

The world that Director Kerry Conran has created is as spectacular as those that George Lucas and Peter Jackson, respectively, developed for the **"Star Wars"** and **"Lord of the Rings"** sagas.

With its pulpy, serial-like nature "Sky Captain" has a blend of high action, romance, humor and references to past films that will remind many of **"Raiders of the Lost Ark."** More importantly, Conran brings the same kind of breathless energy and enthusiasm to the material that Spielberg did; it feels as if it is the creation of endlessly creative kids at play on a rainy day.

"Sky Captain" is a blast from the first frame to the last, one of those visionary film epics that comes along once in a great while and rips up the map in terms of what the art form can achieve in the hands of people more keen of pushing the envelope instead of playing it safe. There are sights in this film that I will never forget for as long as I continue to watch film. There are those enormous giant robots destroying New York City and the breathtaking underwater dogfight never seen before on screen.

Released by **Paramount Pictures**, the film opened like summer release in an ultrawide 3,170 locations and hit the #1 spot at the US boxoffice. On its first outing outside of the US, it also took the #1 spot at the Taiwan boxoffice last week.• by PETER SOBCZYNSKI, < criticdoctor.com >

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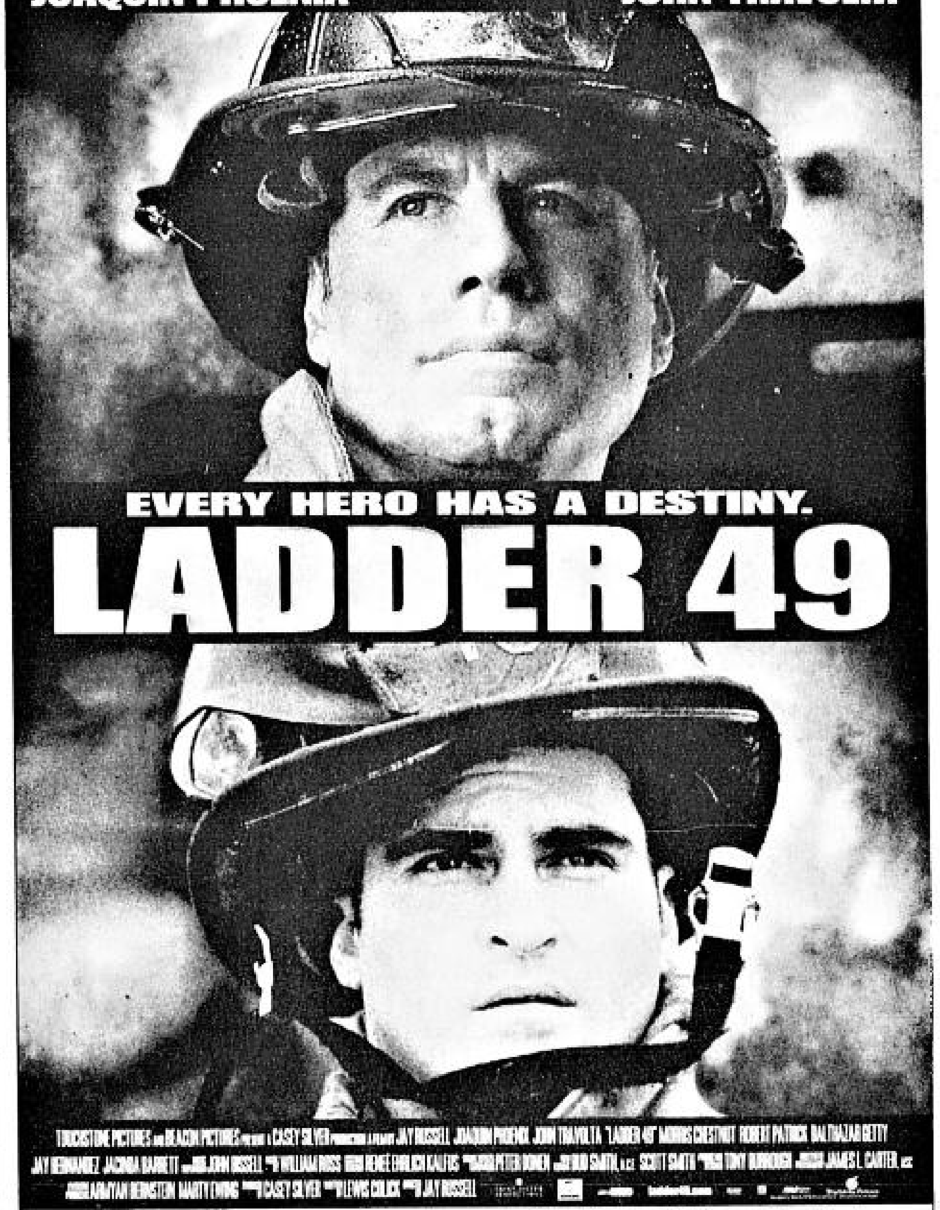

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ENTERTAINMENT

Jay-R: I don't think I'm sexy

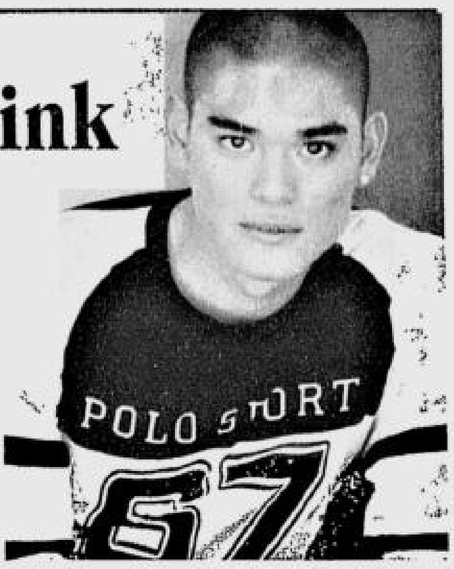
By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

NO, JAY-R wasn't really naked under those green apples or that can of paint.

Singer Jay-R recently revealed that doing the photo shoot for Cosmopolitan Magazine's 2004 Centerfolds was, by far, easier to do than his guest appearance in Bench Understatement underwear and fashion show last August. He was wearing boxer briefs during the magazine shoot, which was later removed through the magic of Photoshop.

The young R&B artist is thankful that people have been recep-

JAY-R/ A39



JAY-R. "*Sana* if I had muscles and stuff."

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6 foreign groups eye stake in Slex rehab

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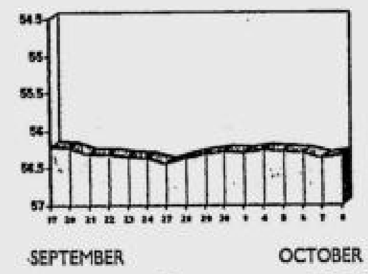

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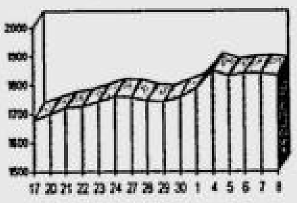
STOCK MARKET

Surging oil prices seen tempering market climb



(See stock market report on Page B5)

STOCKS are expected to resume their upswing, though the climb may be tempered by increasing oil prices, analysts said.

"We remain bullish for the medium term, especially after the composite index breached the 1,800 psychological resistance level," Jose Vistan of AB Capital Securities Inc. said.

He added that investors were impressed with President Macapagal-Arroyo's commitments to institute major fiscal reforms.

"The government aims to balance the budget by 2009 and Congress is seeking to pass at least eight revenue measures that are expected to help boost state coffers. This has prompted the government and international financial agencies to raise the country's growth targets for 2004 and 2005. Moreover, there has been a sense of political stability in the country these days," he added.

What should cap the market's bullishness are the downgrade warnings by international credit-rating firms.

Standard &Poor's last week warned of a sovereign downgrade for the country due to what it perceived as the slow progress in initiating fiscal reforms.

Despite these, the week ended on a sweet note, as the composite index gained 49 points or 2.8 percent to close at 1,836.47.

BPI Trade said in its weekly report that the Gokongwei firms JG Summit and Digital Telecommunications Inc. were among the stellar performers. San Miguel Corp. was also in the limelight after some P6 billion worth of its shares were sold in huge cross sales last week.

Speculation was that the SMC Retirement Fund bought shares of pension

SURGING/ B6

By Clarissa S. Batino

HOPEWELL Crown Infrastructure Inc., the private group tasked to rehabilitate and operate the South Luzon Expressway, is in talks with six foreign groups interested in participating in the P10-billion upgrade of the Slex.

Joel Bañares, president of Hopewell Crown, said the company was discussing possible ventures with Egis of France, Leighton of Australia, Cise of Spain, MTD Capital of Malaysia, American firm Transcore and SNC Lavalin of Canada.

Egis and Leighton are also partners of Benpres Corp. in Manila North Tollways Corp. Cise, MTD and Transcore are all tollway operators in their respective countries.

"We are in various stages of negotiation with the foreign groups but all have a high level of interest. The Slex is a very viable project. We want to be able to choose a strategic partner within the year," Bañares said in an interview.

Bañares was finance undersecretary during the Estrada administration in charge of the country's foreign borrowings.

He said Metro Pacific Corp. had approached the group but that the discussion was nothing serious.

"I think Metro Pacific is focusing first on the Skyway project, which also needs attention. The group approached us after much had been written about their interest in the Slex," said the Hopewell Crown official.

First Pacific Co. Ltd, parent firm of Metro Pacific, is keen on rehabilitating Skyway Corp. First Pacific managing head Manuel Pangilinan said the group also wanted to take part in the upgrade and link-up of the South Luzon road all the way to the Batangas port.

Bañares said Hopewell would eventually select one or two from the six foreign groups to become its strategic partner. Hopewell owns 80 percent of South Luzon Tollway Corp., a joint venture with Philippine National Construction Corp.

The group of George Go, through Crown Equities Inc., used to own 90 percent of Hopewell Crown but ceded early this year 60 percent of its stake to Northeast Development Acquisitions Corp. The company is backed by low-key Filipino investors who would rather remain

6 FOREIGN/ B10

Vehicle assemblers cut sales target by 12%

By Ronnel W. Domingo

WITH only a quarter left in the year, local vehicle assemblers have slashed their total sales forecast by 12.4 percent to 87,600 units from 100,000 units due to concerns over the economic situation and the influx of imported used vehicles.

Total industry sales slid by 7.6 percent in the first nine months to 64,523 units from 69,858 units in the same period in 2003.

Speaking for the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines and the Truck Manufacturers Association (TMA), Elizabeth Lee said the move was made despite an earlier expectation that sales would improve after the elections last May.

Lee, who is president of TMA, said the local automotive industry was positively linked with the national economy and that they move in the same direction.

She said that while the country may not yet be in a fiscal crisis, the sentiment is down and businesses were holding off on spending.

Lee said assemblers and dealers have been trying to entice buyers with promotions, especially through financing perks.

The official added that vehicle sales would pick up in the last quarter as it generally did, but it would not hit the original target of 100,000 units.

Campi and TMA kept the target of selling 33,000 units of passenger cars but scaled down the 67,000-unit projection for commercial vehicles to 54,600 units—a decrease of 18.5 percent.

VEHICLE/ B10

INQUIRER MONITOR

Figures that matter in our nation's life

China factor

(2005)

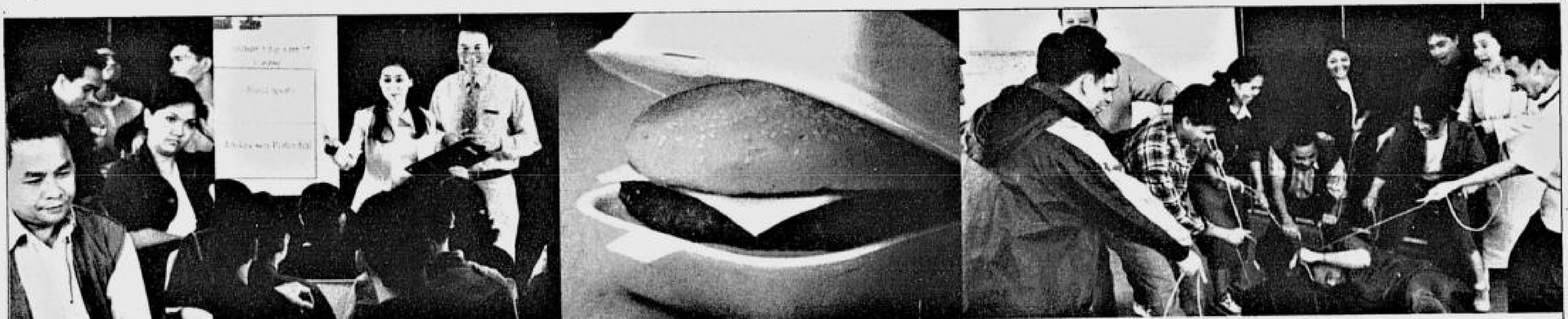
	Effect of China slowdown but with Japan and US acceleration		Effect of simultaneous slowdown in China, Japan and US	
	Changes in:		Changes in:	
	GDP growth (percentage points)	Trade Balance ($ billion)	GDP growth (percentage points)	Trade Balance ($ billion)
Korea	-0.12	-0.17	-0.69	-1.28
Singapore	0.11	0.02	-1.01	-0.28
Indonesia	0.07	0.06	-0.49	-0.38
Malaysia	0.07	0.06	-0.74	-0.61
Thailand	0.12	0.08	-0.40	-0.37
Philippines	0.27	0.02	-0.87	-0.08

Source: Asian Development Bank

A SLOWDOWN in China's economy is expected to have varying degrees of effectson several countries, including the Philippines, which is experiencing a growing trade relation with the former.

Although the Philippines will still grow even if the Chinese economy contracts, a simultaneous slowdown in China, Japan and the United States will impact negatively on the country's growth.

Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research



The bus line and the bankers

(Plus, a few words on the educational qualities of merienda)

Mr. Lejano sat jaded and impatient in the corner. With him, fifty hard-nosed veteran bus drivers, conductors, and ticket inspectors. They normally spent their days inside tons of diesel-propelled metal, crawling through the traffic-fume laden streets of the metropolis. None of them relished the idea of being gathered together that day for, of all things, a seminar.

But orders were orders. And not being inclined to disobey, Mr. Lejano and his companions settled for grudging compliance instead.

It was around this point that we stepped into the room.

We were a team of trainers from iBank's Center for Learning. Our days were spent giving talks to bank executives, preparing training programs, and other developmental activities. Common ground, at that moment, was as rare as an empty seat on an MRT train during rush hour.

Prior to this moment, the only words we had ever shared with bus drivers like Mr. Lejano were "Para po sa tabi!" or "Manong bayad po" or perhaps at most "Pakibaba po ako sa Crossing."

But our client, the owner of the bus line, asked us if we could help train his people. If we could smooth out the rough edges in their work attitude, help them work as a team and deliver better service. We were to help them see their job as something more than a means to make money. In a day, we were expected to make them fall in love with their work.

We resorted to what we considered our top secret ice breaker: snack packs.

Nothing fancy, truth be told. Sandwiches, chips, biscuits, fruit juice.

But sip by sip and crumb by crumb, the room began to warm up.

What they had all assumed would be a lecture was instead a dialogue. It didn't take us long to understand the frustration brought about by frivolous traffic ordinances and a daily diet of carbon monoxide. For their part, they saw how commuters would be rightfully indignant if a bus swerved irreverently in pursuit of more passengers.

The day progressed and through our battery of activities and exercises (and lunch of course!), they went from not caring whose toes they stepped on, to slipping into others' shoes. They weren't griping about problems. They were exploring solutions.

The session drew to a close, but not their enthusiasm. They eagerly posed for pictures, thanked us for our time, and looked forward to the next day.

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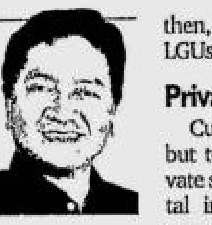
Getting infrastructure right



NO FREE LUNCH

Cielito F. Habito

CERTAINLY one of the major sources of our producers' uncompetitiveness is lack of the same kind of power, transport, communication and other infrastructure facilities that their foreign counterparts can take for granted. It was quite appropriate, then, that the recent Philippine Business Conference devoted one of its sessions to this very basic component of our development strategy. After Secretaries Romulo Neri of Neda and Leandro Mendoza of DOTC regaled the audience with the government's infrastructure program, I was requested to react to the two Cabinet members' comprehensive presentations. I chose to focus my comments on six points, and I summarize them below.

Coordination is key

In the 1990s, the government had envisioned a seamless multimodal transport system. We did not deem it enough to provide separately for adequate facilities in air, water and land including rail transport. We also saw the need to make them connect seamlessly with one another. A person who flies into Manila ought to be able to hop onto a bus or train (and not be limited to taking an expensive taxi), and conveniently get to her final destination in the city or province, or if necessary, get to the pier to catch a ship to her home in the Visayas or Mindanao. Such convenience can be taken for granted in many cities abroad. But we continue to wonder why our LRT system failed to take the extra kilometer to connect to the domestic and international air terminals at Naia. Or to the port area, for that matter.

I also recounted my experience of having had to mediate between DPWH and DOTC in the mid-'90s in their dispute as to whether the LRT-2 (DOTC) or the C-5 (DPWH) should go over or under at the Aurora Boulevard/Katipunan intersection. It turned out they both had planned on taking the surface route, and it took months to resolve that one. The lesson to me then was clear: if DPWH and at least the transport side of DOTC were together in the same department to begin with, the issue would have never arisen!

Let LGUs do it

To the extent possible, infrastructure serving the local areas ought to be put under the charge of the local governments. Farm to market roads, irrigation and post-harvest facilities are best handled by the LGUs who would know best where they can be most beneficial. DPWH, NIA and other national infrastructure agencies ought to limit themselves to national systems and to providing technical standards, guidance and supervision to the local governments as they fulfill their proper role in providing local infrastructure. Much of the infrastructure budget, then, should be passed on to the LGUs for execution.

Private sector role

Current realities give us no choice but to continue relying on the private sector to finance some of our vital infrastructures, through build-operate-transfer (BOT) schemes and their variants. But the lesson we learned from our 1990s experience was that government must no longer take on an undue part of the risks as it did before. That is what made us pile up our contingent liabilities to private entities, much of which have become actual liabilities that now contribute to our heavy fiscal burden. Market-related risks are rightly borne by the private contractor, for example. Government guarantees should be limited to risks within its control, like political risk.

Tapping equity markets to fund infrastructure projects may also be explored. Other countries have successfully raised funding for public facilities by selling shares of stock in a publicly owned and operated facility. We have enough financial geniuses around who could help package such schemes for financially viable infrastructure projects.

But we cannot attract private funds unless there is reasonable assurance of commensurate returns. Thus, an important ingredient is the acceptance by the using public that good infrastructure costs money to provide, and toll charges and user fees must be realistic. We pay much less than the Indonesians, Malaysians and Thais agree to pay to use their toll roads, for example. We cannot expect the government to provide subsidies it cannot afford. That is why we are turning to the private sector in the first place.

One Mindanao

In addressing Mindanao's inferior infrastructure, our goal must be to link together the various economic centers of Mindanao, so we achieve a truly unified Mindanao economy. As it is, it remains an economy of isolated satellites, each one looking to Manila and Cebu, rather than to one another. Mindanao will never take off on its own until we fix the links among the economic centers of Regions 9 to 13 and the ARMM, for example. But the highway link between, say, Butuan and Davao remains pathetic. And this is repeated for much of the island. Little wonder that there remains so much poverty on the island—and that the recent SWS survey on hunger showed alarming and increased rates of hunger in Mindanao.

Simple solutions

We need not think in terms of expensive, capital intensive projects to respond to every infrastructure need. In some cases, simpler and cheaper solutions can be just as effective. I've written before of that B'laan upland community in South Cotabato whose request from government was quite simple: horses to transport their farm produce to the market. Repairing the existing but badly damaged farm to market road is clearly a non-option at this time. But a few horses put in the charge of barangay authorities would do just as well to uplift their livelihoods. Government must look out for these simpler options whenever possible.

My sixth point required no further elaboration: massive leakages of public infrastructure funds through graft and corruption simply must end. If all the money allocated to infrastructure in past years really went to building them, our infrastructure would not be in the inferior state it is in today.

Comments welcome at chabito@ateneo.edu

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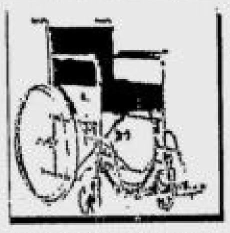

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FISCAL PERKS

Banks rush to sell NPAs

By Doris C. Dumlao

WITH the deadline under the Special Purpose Vehicle Act only five months away, Philippine banks are rushing to avail themselves of fiscal incentives for the unloading of bad assets worth a combined P34.4 billion.

In a recent report, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Officer-in-Charge Armando Suratos said the BSP was processing applications for certificates of eligibility (COE) from 19 banks involving P34.4 billion worth of non-performing assets.

He said the amount of NPAs already transferred under the SPV framework had surged to P4.5 billion as of end-September from only P713.3 million early this year. These covered 18 banks, all of which had received their COEs from the BSP.

"Availment of incentives under the SPV Law to dispose of NPAs is finally gaining momentum after a slow start," Suratos said.

"We welcome banks' greater resolve in cleaning up their accounts. This is necessary in order to strengthen the banking system," he said.

Suratos said the COEs that had been issued by the BSP so far involved the sale of real and other properties owned and acquired to individuals and settlement of non-performing loans by dacion en pago or payment in kind.

He said three banks had pending application for COEs with the BSP involving the bulk sale of P10.1 billion worth of NPAs.

"This does not yet include the deal announced by United Coconut Planters Bank recently involving the sale of P13.6 billion of its NPAs and National Steel Corp. that is still being completed," Suratos said.

The Securities and Exchange Commission, for its part, had approved 36 applications from companies that proposed to help banks and other financial entities clean up their idle assets consisting of either bad loans and foreclosed properties. These SPVs were able to meet the deadline set by the government last Sept. 18 for them to register and avail themselves of tax incentives under the SPV law.

The SPV Law intends to help banks get rid of their non-performing assets by waiving some of the taxes and reducing fees usually collected in the sale or transfer of assets. The law waived the documentary stamp tax, capital gains tax and e-VAT (expanded value added tax) and likewise reduced the registration/transfer fees by 50 percent.

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DBP urged to earmark ₱1B for Seipi suppliers

By Ronnel W. Domingo

A GROUP of semiconductor and electronics firms is in talks with the Development Bank of the Philippines for a P1-billion fund for the development of small enterprises that support the electronics sector.

Ernie B. Santiago, executive director of the Semiconductor and Electronics Industries of the Philippines Inc., said his group was working on a possible partnership with the DBP. The group is asking the DBP to "lock in" to Seipi's allied industries a billion out of the P17 billion earmarked for lending to small and medium enterprises.

Santiago said the group had committed to provide the direction and leadership in developing its members' suppliers, which cover a diverse range of businesses.

"It is up to the bank to draw up a program on how to extend this lending facility to Seipi suppliers," Santiago said.

He explained that the DBP would have to evaluate first the financing needs and payment habits of interested parties.

For its part, Seipi had identified the following for implementation: Survey of the financing needs and payment habits of suppliers by the Association of Seipi Finance Executives; holding of a seminar for interested parties by the Association of Seipi Associate and Affiliate Members, and identification of the financial requirement of the intended beneficiaries by the Association of Seipi Purchasing Managers.

In April, Trade Secretary Cesar V. Purisima said the government had prepared a road map for SME development, focusing on providing funds for startups and for venture capital.

At the same time, Purisima urged financial institutions to create a credit bureau that would serve as a clearing house for loan information to SMEs.

The trade chief said the road map reflected the market and technical needs of the various subsectors of SMEs. He said it also defined the efforts and improvements of existing SME programs.

Purisima said one of the components of the framework was to set up and strengthen industry centers for processed food, furniture, inter-regional alliance, packaging development, agro-fisheries and marine industry development.

He added that the Department of Trade and Industry was hoping to adopt the best-practice model where SMEs would benchmark themselves against those who were performing well.

He also noted that there was a slowdown in direct lending to SMEs from P233 million in December 2002 to P227 million in June 2003.

Transco completes Leyte-Bohol link-up

THE NATIONAL Transmission Corp. (Transco) recently completed the P700-million Leyte-Bohol Interconnection Project, which is expected to further boost the reliability of power supply in Central Visayas.

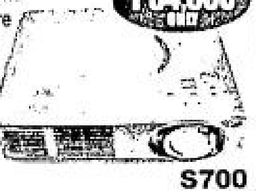
Transco president Alan T. Ortiz said the project, funded by the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC), was designed to provide an additional 260 circuit kilometers of 138-kilovolt transmission lines and 130 megavolt-ampere substation capacity in the Visayas.

The transmission lines now have the capability to transport 100 megawatts of power, up from the previous 40 MW, Ortiz said.

The project included the upgrading of a transmission substation in Ubay town to 100 megavolt-amperes. Ortiz said this was enough to meet Bohol's power requirements in the next 10 years. He expressed confidence that the assurance of a reliable power supply "will augur well for the entry of more investments to and expansion of businesses in Bohol."

Local officials and business leaders of Bohol lauded the completion of the interconnection project, saying the "link-up is a vital component in the preservation of the natural beauty of this tourist destination."

Bohol Gov. Erico Aumentado said that since the project would bring in "clean energy" generated from geothermal plants in nearby Leyte, it would "boost the province's bid to become the home and the model of environmentally responsible electricity."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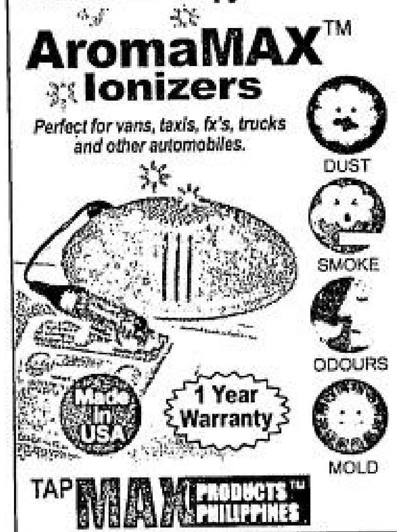
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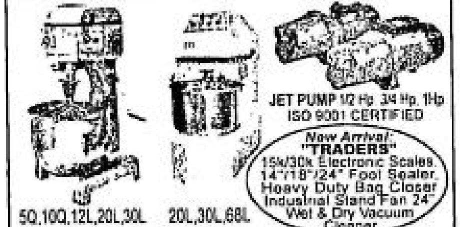
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ValuCare recently inaugurated its new health care clinic with a ribbon cutting ceremony and mass. The clinic, located at the 10th floor of The New Medical City along Ortigas Avenue, Pasig City (beside the Meralco Foundation), will be responsible for the in-patient and ambulatory healthcare needs of ValuCare members. A full time nurse and doctor are stationed at the clinic, and a roving Customer Liaison Officer attends to the needs of ValuCare members who are confined in the hospital.

Shown in the ceremonial ribbon cutting held last September 28, 2004 are Ms. Rosemarie Yu, Valucare VP for Finance and Mr. Jesus O. Torre, ValuCare Chief Operating Officer, together with Dr. Paul Allan Espina (AVP-Medical Director I) and Dr. Irene Limpo (AVP-Medical Director II).

The establishment of the new clinic is in line with ValuCare's ongoing commitment to provide quality service by instituting improvements and expanding its service base to meet the demands of its increasing number of members.

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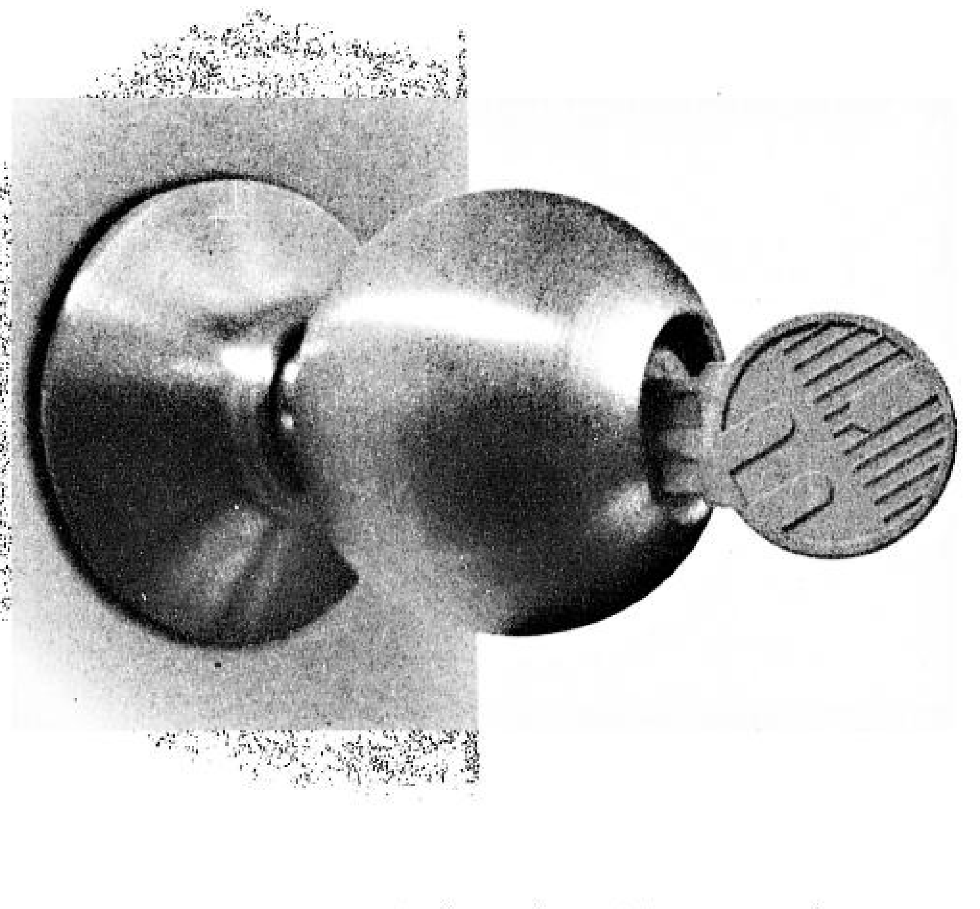
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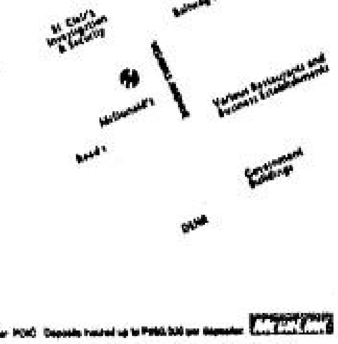
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Banks given up to end-2004 to sell CTFs

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE MONETARY Board has given banks until the end of this year to shift from common trust funds (CTFs) to unit investment trust funds (UITFs).

This means the banking system can still offer new CTFs until end of this year.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Deputy Governor for bank supervision and examination Alberto Reyes said the extension of the deadline for the complete shift from CTFs to UITFs was in response to a petition submitted by the Trust Officers Association of the Philippines (TOAP).

In an earlier ruling, the Monetary Board ordered banks to stop accepting new investments in CTFs starting Oct. 1 as it wanted the banking system to shift to the new instrument which, it said, was a better product.

The BSP said UITF would more realistically reflect the underlying market values and, therefore, investors would be properly guided in making investment decisions . Also, trust departments, acting independently from the bank proper, will be in a better position to clarify that funds pooled into UITFs are separate from the bank's main portfolio and that the risks involved in such investments are greater.

Under the rules for UITFs, the pool of funds can only be placed in liquid investments and tradable financial instruments. Tradability is premised on the existence of a readily and regularly available two-way quote.

As such, funds pooled into UITs can not be directly relent by the banks but could be placed in equities, bonds and high-grade commercial papers which are traded in the market.

In a separate interview, TOAP president Ador Abrogena estimated that banks would need about six months to set up their UITFs in place and two years to fully unwind existing CTFs.

Abrogena said banks welcomed the exemption of the UITFs from the single borrower's limit as well as the lending restrictions to directors, officers, stockholders and related interests since the new product would be separated from the bank proper. However, he said there would be some difficulty in shifting from CTFs to UITFs, particularly with regards to high-quality loans currently under the CTFs.

He said there was so far no system that could facilitate the standardized conversion of outstanding lending using the CTFs into UITFs.

Existing long-term investments in CTFs, he said, made the problem more complicated.

"Some investors do not want want to move their investments," Abrogena said.

Finance says GIR level still safe

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance said there was no plan yet to increase the country's foreign borrowings, despite the drop in the country's foreign exchange reserves to below the $16-billion benchmark.

Finance Undersecretary Eric Recto said the government would not make a move as long as the gross international reserves of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas stays within the target of $14 billion to $15 billion this year.

"Even the BSP said the GIR was still at a comfortable level," said Recto, who is in charge of the country's foreign borrowings.

Last September, the GIR slightly dipped to a seven-month low of $15.91 billion from $16 billion in August, mainly due to the servicing of public sector debts.

GIR, composed of the BSP's foreign currency holdings, gold reserves, special drawing rights from multilateral institutions and foreign investments, measures the economy's ability to service its foreign exchange requirement.

The declining GIR was one of the reasons behind the BSP's proposal for the government to increase its foreign borrowings for next year.

The BSP proposed that the national government's foreign borrowings be raised to 40 percent of its total borrowing requirements for 2005.

The borrowing mix for next year was initially set by the Development Budget and Coordinating Committee at 78-22, in favor of domestic sources.

The DOF wanted to limit foreign borrowings to protect the country's already precarious financial condition from foreign exchange volatility.

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EVP and COO, Aboitiz Equity Ventures

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Mr. ANUPAM PRAKASH
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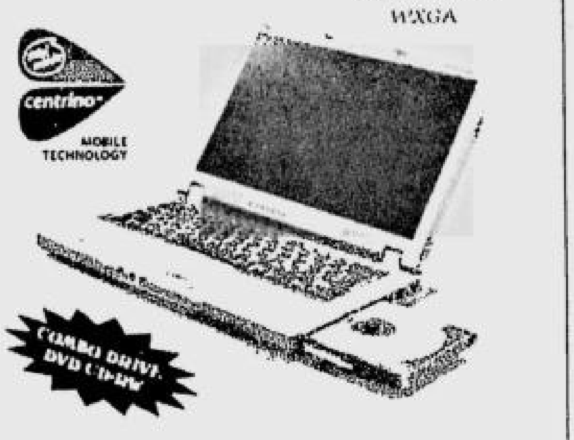

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ICTSI gets CSX-ed up

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

THE COUNTRY'S very own ICTSI has been shortlisted as one of the eight global firms qualified to bid for the worldwide port assets of US rail giant CSX, according to a report of the South China Morning Post.

The Hong Kong paper reported Thursday that International Container Terminal Services Inc. will submit a joint bid with one of the seven other suitors, which include such heavyweights as Hutchison, Wharf, and Singapore's PSA Corp.

Citigroup of New York is said to be conducting the bidding, to be concluded next month, in behalf of CSX.

CSX Corp., whose former CEO is now US Treasury Secretary John Snow, has put on the block the entire array of container terminals operated by its subsidiary, CSX World Terminals, in Hong Kong, China, Australia, Dominican Republic, Germany, Russia, United Kingdom, United States and Venezuela.

CSX World Terminals reported $235 million in revenues in 2002, excluding the Dominican port that opened only last December. Bids could be in excess of $1 billion, according to the Hong Kong paper.

When reached, ICTSI chair Enrique Razon Jr. refused to even comment on the accuracy of the news report, since apparently all prospective bidders have signed up to a non-disclosure proviso.

But according to speculator Señor Bob O. de la Yuca, ICTSI is particularly interested in the Venezuela and Dominican Republic operations, given its foothold in Latin America and the Spanish heritage of Razon (notwithstanding his Lebanese looks) and other Kastila board members.

That last sentence, although maybe true, happens to be a joke.

Seriously now, ICTSI's two foreign ports in Brazil and Poland have already given the listed company a 28-percent boost in total revenues in the second quarter of the year, more than offsetting a decline in Philippine operations.

More specifically, the Poland and Brazil operations contributed P177.83 million in net income from January to June 2004, a turnaround from the more than P170-million loss the foreign operations registered from the first half of 2003.

The Baltic seaport, incidentally, was acquired only in the second half of 2003, but "(its) performance...has exceeded all our expectations," especially with Poland joining the European Union in May, an exuberant Razon told this year's shareholders' meeting.

ICTSI disclosed in the second quarter of 2004 that the weakening peso "gave rise to a negative adjustment to cash of P75 million," but that trend should be reversed by the second half of the year given that the dollar revenues especially from the Baltic seaport would already account for about 50 percent of the company's total earnings.

For the first half of 2004, ICTSI reported earnings per share of P0.276, as against P0.135 for the same period last year. It closed Friday at P5.10, as against a 52-week low of P2.75.

Royal glitterati

THE COUNTRY'S top socialites will have a rare occasion to dress in their finest gowns and presumably even display their dazzling pieces of jewelry.

The occasion is the Oct. 25 fundraising dinner at Shangri-La Makati with Princess Caroline of Monaco, who is visiting the country to pursue her worldwide charitable works.

Unknown to many, the daughter of the late Princess Grace has been supporting communities around the world, including a project for Manila's street children under her Amade Philippines Foundation and the Virlanie Foundation of French national Dominique Lemay.

Tickets for the gala dinner, with an Inno Sotto fashion show to boot, starts at P10,000, escalating to as much as P50,000, depending on where one prefers to sit.

And for those feeling magnanimous, a donation of P1 million "and upwards" would guarantee a seat at the head table with the visiting princess, who will be escorted to the affair by her husband, Prince Ernst of Hanover.

The organizing committee itself is local royalty personified, with chair Marietta Santos, Imelda Cojuangco, Chito Madrigal-Collantes, Bea Zobel and Mary Prieto leading the good breeding brigade.

The lifestyle press has been invited to the royal affair, but publicist Annie Ringor is pleading with the irrepressible editors and columnists not to wander off and press on Ms Cojuangco about actress Gretchen Barretto. Whoops, that's another story.

Ready, AIM, fire

IT LOOKS like Metrobank director and former AIM president Felipe Alfonso will have to slug it out in court as a defendant of a P28.5-million bouncing checks complaint along with his "agent," Fort car accessories dealer Anthony Bitanga.

After Metrobank's unexpectedly called off the twice-postponed mediation meeting, the law firm of Nagrampa Young and Partners filed on Friday an estafa complaint against Alfonso and Bitanga before the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office.

We will stop here, since the complaint has already been lodged and we do not want to be accused of trying to stampede the fiscal into a favored direction. (*For background, see Cocktales of Oct. 1, 2004.*)

According to the grapevine, Bitanga has another problem closer, literally, to home. The Corinthian Gardens house that he lives in had actually been rented out in the name of another party, and the check payments issued by this party, said to be a female friend of Bitanga's father, have also started bouncing.

The Corinthian Gardens house happens to be owned by the family of golf columnist Arsenic Laurel.

Heard through the grapevine

SAN MIGUEL Corp. has denied that it acquired a large block of company shares from the market on Wednesday.

But a San Miguel spokesperson was not sure if the written denial also encompassed the San Miguel Retirement Fund, which reportedly made the acquisition.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com)

New financing scheme for MRT-7 set

By Michelle V. Remo

THE PROPONENT of Line 7 of the Metro Railway Transit (MRT-7) system, which will connect North Edsa and Bulacan, has come up with an improved financial design for the project after the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) asked for a proposal that will not require financing from the cash-strapped government.

Universal LRT Corp., the private-sector consortium acting as proponent of the MRT-7 and which is headed by former finance secretary Roberto de Ocampo, has submitted to the Department of Transportation and Communication its revised proposal.

NEW/B6

Gov't keeps 4-5% inflation target

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE GOVERNMENT is sticking to its inflation target of 4 to 5 percent for 2004-2006 despite the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' own admission that this would be exceeded this year and next year due to skyrocketing oil prices.

This year, for instance, the inflation rate is seen to average at 5.4 percent, but the target range would be kept nevertheless, BSP officer-in-charge Armado Suratos said.

"The 4 to 5 percent target represents the level of inflation that the government wants to achieve to promote consumption spending and business investments in line with the economy's growth objectives," Suratos said.

"While this is the desired level of inflation, the BSP recognizes that the nature of the ongoing inflation process is driven largely by supply-side pressures, particularly the sharp uptrend in oil prices, increase in transport and power costs, as well as the constraints on specific food products such as fish and meat," he said.

Suratos said the BSP's forecast of 5.4 percent for the year was based on the 4.8-percent average so far during the first nine months of the year, the outlook on oil prices for the rest of the year, as well as other assumptions on the fiscal sector and economic growth.

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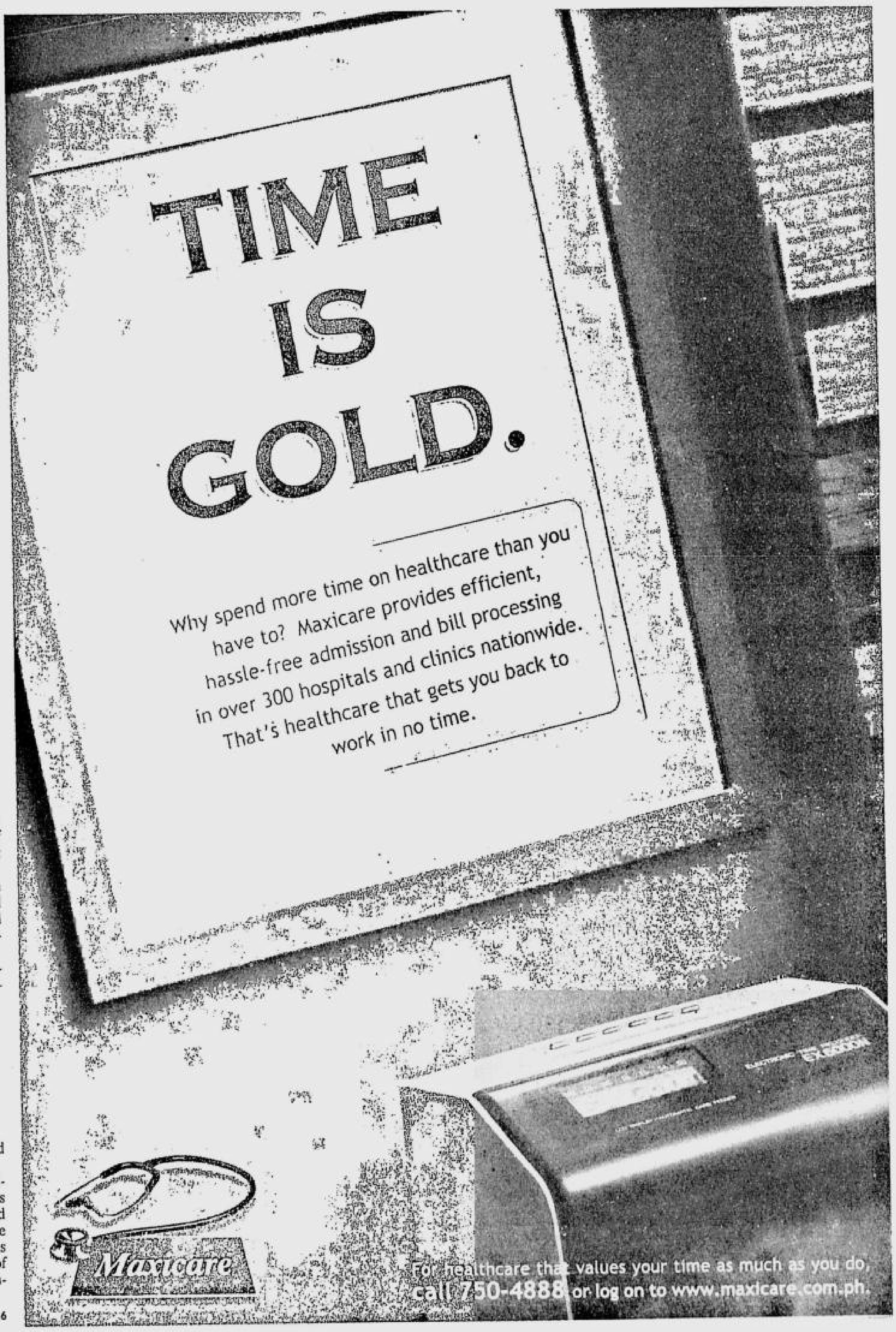
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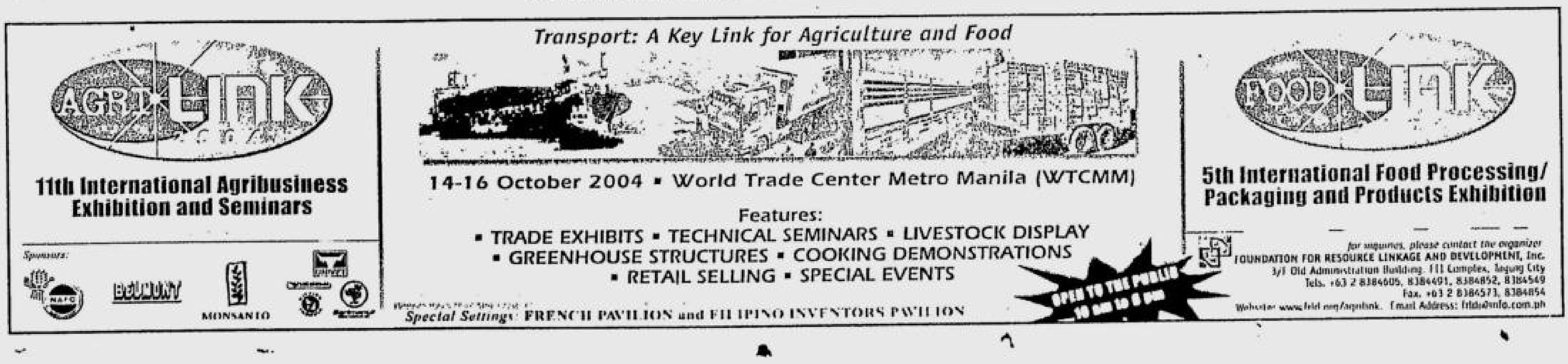
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DOTC: No open skies deal with US

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE PHILIPPINES would continue to renegotiate a lopsided air service agreement with the United States even after the open skies deal with the US supposedly [illegible] on Oct. 1, according to Transport Secretary Leandro Mendoza.

He said as far as the Arroyo administration was concerned, the open skies agreement with the US was still not in effect.

"There is no open skies (policy) as far as the Philippine government is concerned," Mendoza told reporters. "We (will) continue to push for renegotiation."

He said the foreign affairs department had been tasked to take the lead in opening a new round of air talks with the US.

Mendoza said the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) had filed a petition with its US counterpart to reopen air talks. The CAB officials still had not received a response.

The Philippines wants the US to grant reciprocal rights to its carriers, the transport chief said.

The Philippines forged an open skies agreement with the US during Martial Law, committing the country to totally liberalize its airports for the unrestricted entry of US carriers to and from the Philippines.

The treaty, signed in the early 1980s, cancelled regulations pertaining to flight frequencies, seating capacity and types of aircraft.

The local carriers said the deal was lopsided because it allowed American carriers unlimited access to the Philippines, while RP airline operators enjoyed no such rights in the United States.

The 1982 Air Transport Agreement between the Philippines and the US was supposed to take effect on Oct. 1, 2003. The agreement provided a one-year period for any of the parties to renegotiate or even abrogate the deal, but no concrete action was taken.

The Philippines is pushing for a "real open skies" policy, under which Philippine carriers could also fly freely to any destination in the US.

Local carriers cannot fly, for example, from Manila to Hawaii, then on to another destination in the US like San Francisco. This activity, which the US government defined as "cabotage," violates the US constitution.

Local carriers like Philippine Airlines also opposed an accelerated liberalization of air traffic rights as it would prejudice the operations of the local industry. Foreign airlines could compete more aggressively by offering lower rates.

But Mendoza said the country would have to deregulate its aviation industry gradually to protect its carriers but at the same time encourage more trade and tourism.

"Our goal is progressive liberalization," said Mendoza.

A gradual opening up of the air industry would be done through the encouragement of constructive competition, increase in traffic rights, promotion of missionary routes, and granting of incentives for investment in alternative gateways.

"The modernization and expansion of airports, as well as the liberalization policy, would make air transportation in the Philippines a strong partner in the decentralization and equalization of progress throughout the country to benefit all of our people, instead of just a small sector," Mendoza said.

Sy, Cuenca land dispute far from over

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE PROPERTY dispute between former Marcos associate Rodolfo Cuenca and mall tycoon Henry Sy Sr. has come to a head after a Makati regional trial court recently voided a bank foreclosure order on the parcels of property and its subsequent sale to the Sy group in the 1980s.

Cuenca, who has since been claiming ownership of the disputed pieces of property, told the INQUIRER that his lawyers were carefully studying a case they would file against the SM Group to compel the mall firm to deposit all income generated from SM Baguio and resort hotel Taal Vista Lodge in Tagaytay.

In 1984, the Development Bank of the Philippines foreclosed on the properties owned and managed by Cuenca through the old Resort Hotels Corp., for allegedly failing to settle P114 million in loans with the bank.

When asked to comment, the lawyers of the SM Group referred the INQUIRER to the Development Bank of the Philippines, saying that the institution knew more about the developments in the case.

A DBP official meanwhile said that the bank complied with all the requirements before they foreclosed on the Resort Hotels Corp. properties. The official said that they had recently filed petition with the Court of Appeals to reverse the Makati RTC ruling.

Last Feb. 13, the Makati RTC ruled that the foreclosure on RHC's property assets were void or without effect.

New financing . . .

From page B5

Neda Director General Romulo Neri said his office was waiting for the DOTC to submit the proposal to the Neda for evaluation. He added that Neda was hopeful the improved proposal would fully meet the requirements of the Investment Coordination Committee (ICC) to make some progress in the MRT-7 project, which is one of the major infrastructure-development priorities of the Arroyo administration.

Under the original financial design of the MRT-7, the government will be required to shoulder about P100 million a year in the first nine years of the mass transport system's operations because revenue from ridership will initially be insufficient to cover for its expenditure requirements.

The original proposal also stated that MRT-7 will pay the government for its advances starting the 10th year of its operation. The consortium will be the one responsible to build, operate and maintain the MRT-7 for 25 years, after which it will be transferred to the national government. The proposal also said that the consortium will be the one to look for financing for the project, which is estimated at $1.2 billion (not $600 million as earlier reported).

Neda said the ICC, which is responsible for approving government projects, gave a first-pass approval of the MRT-7 project last March because it recognized the economic benefits of the project. The ICC, however, requested an improved financial design so that the government would not be financially burdened.

Neri earlier said the Neda-ICC asked the consortium to improve the project's financial design in such a way that it will not have to incur deficits, and therefore no longer require the government to provide financing.

"We were told that the revised proposal submitted to the DOTC is already deficit neutral, and so we are looking forward to evaluate it," Neri said in a telephone interview.

"As soon as the improved proposal gets the approval of the ICC, then we expect that the construction of the project would start soon," Neri said. We expect the area connecting North Edsa and Bulacan to be heavily congested in the next couple of years, and so we want MRT-7 to prevent serious traffic," he added.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of October 8, 2004)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.15	3.15	3.15	3.15	16,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	19	19	18.75	19	35,400
Bank of the Phil. Islands	48.5	48.5	47.5	48	3,063,700
China Banking Corp.	530	530	530	530	1,000
Citystate Savings Bank	16.25	16.25	16.25	16.25	1,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	43	43	43	43	5,300
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	28	28.5	28	28.5	10,900
Philippine National Bank	23	23.25	23	23.25	9,000
Phil. Savings Bank	28	28	28	28	3,800
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	12.75	12.75	12.75	12.75	10,000
Security Bank Corp.	20.5	21	20.5	21	55,700
Union Bank of the Phil.	24	24	23.75	23.75	103,800
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	0.95	0.95	0.93	0.93	100,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	1,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	2470	2470	2470	2470	390
Pci Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.36	1.36	1.34	1.34	51,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1675	1675	1675	1675	290
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	22.25	22.25	22.25	22.25	7,300
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.62	1.7	1.6	1.62	108,430,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	1140	1140	1115	1115	33,140
Ipeople Inc.	1.7	1.74	1.7	1.74	220,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.047	0.0525	0.047	0.0525	3,200,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.037	0.041	0.037	0.04	50,900,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.39	0.52	0.39	0.52	3,180,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	54,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	2.75	2.75	2.65	2.7	8,242,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.42	0.53	0.42	0.46	7,060,000
Transpacific Broadcast	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38	20,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1475	1495	1475	1485	90,900
Ivantage Corp.	0.71	0.72	0.7	0.71	6,130,000
Philweb Corp.	0.012	0.014	0.012	0.014	444,900,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	16	16.25	16	16.25	25,700
Manila Electric Co. B	24.75	24.75	24.5	24.75	132,200
Petron Corp.	2.9	3	2.9	2.9	1,198,000
Salcon Power Corp.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	125,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.08	1.1	1.08	1.1	201,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	5	5.1	4.95	5.1	1,336,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.32	0.34	0.32	0.33	470,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.38	0.41	0.38	0.4	5,860,000
Republic Cement Corp.	0.57	0.57	0.57	0.57	40,000
Sanitary Wares Mfg. Corp.	0.235	0.24	0.235	0.24	130,000
Union Cement Corp.	2.6	2.65	2.55	2.55	2,901,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.05	3.15	3.05	3.15	1,217,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	30	30	30	30	52,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	28	28	28	28	63,600
RFM Corp.	0.74	0.75	0.72	0.75	70,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.36	0.37	0.36	0.37	160,000
San Miguel Corp. A	58	58.5	58	58.5	193,500
San Miguel Corp. B	71	73	71	73	1,121,500
Universal Robina Corp.	9.5	9.8	9.5	9.8	192,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.29	0.3	1,400,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Atok-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	2,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.004	0.0042	0.004	0.0042	54,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.0042	0.0044	0.0042	0.0044	37,000,000
Ayala Corp.	6.5	6.5	6.4	6.4	5,882,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	4,818,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	11.5	11.5	11.5	11.5	500
Ajo Net Holdings Inc.	0.03	0.031	0.029	0.031	5,100,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	88,000
APC Group Inc.	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	100,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.007	0.007	0.0065	0.007	121,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.25	0.27	0.23	0.27	270,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.78	1.8	1.78	1.8	30,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	17	17	16.5	17	6,400
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	150,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.57	0.58	0.57	0.58	3,620,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.14	0.15	0.14	0.145	2,850,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.26	0.26	1,800,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.145	0.15	0.145	0.145	1,250,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	2.3	2.75	2.3	2.75	22,587,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.035	0.035	0.034	0.035	1,200,000
Fil-Estate Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	40,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1	1	1	1	10,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	4.25	4.3	4.15	4.15	30,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	27.5	27.5	27.5	27.5	369,500
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.16	0.17	0.16	0.17	220,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.0725	0.0725	0.07	0.07	11,000,000
House Of Investments Inc.	0.7	0.71	0.7	0.7	490,000
Ionics Inc.	1.96	1.98	1.94	1.98	465,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	2.22	2.75	2.22	2.4	4,030,000
Jolliville Holdings Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	10,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.48	1.5	1.46	1.48	252,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.38	1.4	1.32	1.32	5,349,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.35	0.52	0.35	0.52	2,720,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.56	0.58	0.55	0.56	83,760,000
Philcomsat Holdings Corp.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	5,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.155	0.16	0.155	0.16	320,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc.	1	1.02	1	1.02	100,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.135	0.15	0.135	0.15	1,400,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.9	0.93	0.9	0.91	260,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41	100,000
South China Resources Inc.	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	10,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	100,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.165	0.165	0.16	0.16	3,990,000
Vivant Corp.	0.8	0.82	0.8	0.82	30,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.235	0.245	0.235	0.235	1,950,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.235	0.24	0.23	0.24	2,210,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Music Semiconductors Corp	1.8	1.82	1.8	1.8	380,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1	1.02	1	1.02	200,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.69	0.69	0.69	0.69	1,870,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.76	1.12	0.76	1.12	9,280,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.6	0.85	0.6	0.84	13,220,000
Manila Jockey Club	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	50,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.36	0.46	0.36	0.37	30,030,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	23	23	22.25	22.25	147,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	3,100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	4,100
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	3,400
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	6.4	6.5	6.4	6.5	59,000
Far Eastern University	430	430	430	430	20
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.9	6.9	6.8	6.8	974,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53	1,080,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.47	0.47	0.45	0.45	6,190,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.15	0.16	0.15	0.155	2,370,000
Eib Realty Developers Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	10,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.43	0.44	0.42	0.42	46,180,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.18	1.18	1.14	1.16	6,307,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.23	0.26	0.23	0.23	4,180,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.51	0.58	0.51	0.56	5,470,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	100,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.085	0.085	0.085	0.085	2,300,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2.18	2.3	2.18	2.22	324,000
SM Development Corp.	1.08	1.1	1.08	1.08	1,071,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.8	6.8	6.6	6.7	21,190,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	50,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	35,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	3	3	2.95	2.95	28,000
Benguet Corp. A	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	5,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	38,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.225	0.23	0.225	0.225	4,720,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.27	440,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	24,200,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	22,900,000
Omico Corp.	0.006	0.0065	0.006	0.006	60,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.028	0.028	0.028	0.028	4,200,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.4	0.41	0.4	0.41	300,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	920,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.013	0.014	0.013	0.013	39,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0048	0.005	0.0048	0.0048	141,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0048	0.005	0.0048	0.0048	138,000,000
Pacifica	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	25,900,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.55	2.55	2.55	2.55	38,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.036	0.037	0.036	0.037	2,300,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.2	0.21	0.2	0.21	890,000

CURRENCIES

October 10, 2004 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.813603	1.000000	56.3390
Japan	Yen	0.007321	0.008998	0.5069
United Kingdom	Pound	1.450004	1.782200	100.4074
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.104350	0.128256	7.2258
Switzerland	Franc	0.643673	0.791139	44.5720
Canada	Dollar	0.645461	0.793336	44.6958
Singapore	Dollar	0.481394	0.591681	33.3347
Australia	Dollar	0.591970	0.727590	40.9917
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.158214	2.652661	149.4483
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.216961	0.266667	15.0238
Brunei	Dollar	0.479974	0.589936	33.2364
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000089	0.000110	0.0062
Thailand	Baht	0.019667	0.024173	1.3619
UAE	Dirham	0.221521	0.272272	15.3395
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.229100	69.2463
Argentina	Peso	0.273710	0.336417	18.9534
Brazil	Real	0.285275	0.350631	19.7542
Denmark	Kroner	0.134398	0.165188	9.3065
India	Rupee	0.017760	0.021829	1.2298
Malaysia	*Ringgit	0.214135	0.263193	14.8280
Mexico	New Peso	0.072256	0.088810	5.0035
New Zealand	Dollar	0.550401	0.676498	38.1132
Korea	Won	0.000708	0.000870	0.0490
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023996	0.029494	1.6617

Surging oil prices . . .

From page B1

fund Government Service Insurance System (GSIS).

"Investors are still focusing on the release of corporate results by the last week of October. Providing support this week is also the positive tax collection in September. However, the market is likely to remain cautious as oil prices trend higher, which rose above $52 per barrel. The peso remains weak and is still hovering above P56 level and close to the all-time low. These factors will continue to weigh on consumer consumption and may limit corporate earnings. There are fears that higher oil prices would push inflation higher and may eventually push interest rates higher," BPI Trade said.

Vistan said investors might take profits after the market's strong run-up recently. "The market is likely to struggle under the weight of oil as it adds to the uncertainty in the market over earnings and the economy," he said.

Elizabeth L. Sanchez

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Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)	1,100,000	-
Baguio Country Club	530,000	650,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	-	80,000
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	-	[illegible]
Camp John Hay	170,000	[illegible]
Canlubang	450,000	-
Canyon Woods	-	180,000
Capitol Hills	-	125,000
Cebu Country Club	1,500,000	1,900,000
Celebrity Sports Club	-	150,000
Club Filipino	100,000	130,000
Eagleridge "A"	-	[illegible]
Eagleridge "B"	-	[illegible]
Eagleridge "C"	-	350,000
Forest Hills "A"		-
Forest Hills "B"		260,000
Forest Hills "C"		220,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	180,000	200,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	-	250,000
Manila Golf (Corporate)	Please Call	11,000,000
Manila Golf (Individual)	11,200,000	-
Manila Polo	2,300,000	2,500,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	300,000	370,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	-	750,000
Manila Yacht Club	-	350,000
Metroclub "A"	150,000	-
Mimosa (Individual)	-	150,000
Mimosa (Corporate)	260,000	275,000
Mt. Malarayat Gold "C"	-	300,000
Orchard Golf Club "A"	180,000	200,000
Orchard Golf Club "B"	250,000	300,000
Orchard Golf Club "C"	-	450,000
Quezon City Sports Club	-	180,000
Sherwood Hills "B"	-	180,000
Rockwell	-	300,000
Spa & Lodge	550,000	650,000
Sta. Elena "A"	1,300,000	1,525,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Corporate)	-	200,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Individual)	-	120,000
Tagaytay Country Club	380,000	450,000
Tagaytay Highlands	750,000	800,000
Tagaytay Midlands	680,000	Please Call
Valle Verde (Individual)	100,000	150,000
Valle Verde (Corporate)	-	200,000
Valley Golf	220,000	250,000
Wack-Wack Golf Club	Please Call	6,000,000

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Canlubang Golf Club		450K
Celebrity Sports Club	140K	-
Eagleridge Golf Club "A"	220K	
Eagleridge Golf Club "B"	290K	
Eagleridge Golf Club "C"	300K	
Eastridge Golf Club "B"	please call	
Makati Sports Club "A"	-	200K
Manila Golf Club - Ind		please call
Manila Polo Club		2 35M
Manila Southwoods "A"		370K
Manila Southwoods "B"		650K
Metro Club "A"	please call	130K
Mimosa (Ind.)		150K
Orchard Golf Club "A"	200K	
Orchard Golf Club "B"	please call	250K
Orchard Golf Club "C"		350K
Palm Country Club	690K all in	550K
Punta Fuego	please call	450K
Riviera Golf Club "A"	please call	-
Rockwell Club	300K	
Spa and Lodge		950K
Sta. Elena Golf Club "A"	1.5M	-
Subic Yacht Club-Ind.	130K	
Tagaytay Higlands Golf Club	-	730K
Tagaytay Midlands		650K
Valle Verde Country Club-Ind.	120K	-
Valley Golf Club	250K	-
Wack Wack Golf Club	6.4M	please call

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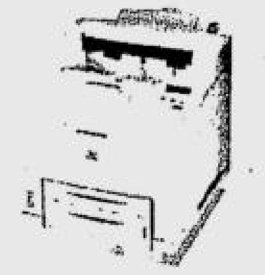

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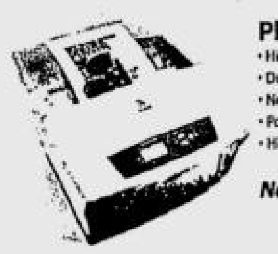

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Cavite names controversial Tan as adopted son

TAGAYTAY CITY—He may be a tax cheat to some and an influence-peddler to others, but for government and university officials of Cavite, controversial Lucio Tan is "a self-made entrepreneur and industrialist" worthy of their emulation and admiration.

He is also someone who could single-handedly spur increased economic development in the province, according to Cavite Gov. Ireneo "Ayong" Maliksi.

Thus, Tan was conferred an honorary degree of Doctor of Science in International Business and Entrepreneurship from the Cavite State University (CavSU).

He was also named an adopted son of Cavite, in a resolution passed by the provincial council, headed by Vice Gov. Johnvic Remulla.

Local officials even presented Tan's residence certificate, which was etched on a plaque.

"Having Tan as an adopted son of Cavite is a greater honor to us Caviteños than perhaps to himself, as he has already been a great help to our country and people," Maliksi said in the ceremony, mostly attended by executives of the Lucio C. Tan Group of Companies and groups of Filipino-Chinese businessmen.

Maliksi said Tan, whose business interests span from banking to beverage, real estate, education, tobacco and chemical manufacturing, had promised to invest more in Cavite.

FILIPINO-CHINESE tycoon Lucio Tan

He added that some of the business executives who accompanied Tan were set to visit several towns in the province to look for potential sites for future ventures.

Asked if he was bothered by allegations that Tan was a tax evader, Maliksi said: "Those are only allegations against him. The court still has to prove that he really did run away from paying taxes. Tan is a good man."

Beginnings

CavSU officials said it was mainly Tan's "phenomenal rise from humble beginnings" that earned him the honorary degree.

A video presentation showed Tan as a 4-year-old, full-blooded Chinese boy who migrated to the Philippines from Fujian, China, with his parents in 1938.

The video likened him to the fictional character Captain America, as he was fondly called "Kapitan" by his employees and friends.

A chemical engineer by profession, Tan worked his way through school, graduating from the Far Eastern University in 1960.

Taking the cue from his father, he later put up the Royal Starch Corp., which eventually went bankrupt.

But the experience, the video said, did not deter him from pursuing other business ventures.

In his acceptance speech, Tan, a firm believer in Confucianism, said he never had a "privileged life as a young man."

"What I am now and what I have today are products of hard work and the continuing quest and thirst for learning," he said.

"I can tell you from personal experience that success does not come easy," he added.

"Everyday, I try to learn something new. This stems from my personal philosophy that I should learn at least 10 percent of everything," Tan said.

Agricultural development

Tan likewise said that agricultural development was still vital to the country's pursuit of economic development.

"I believe that in agriculture lies the solution to our country's economic problem," he said.

He said that as an agricultural school, CavSU should continue to expand its curriculum to help students in business administration and entrepreneurship.

Tan then cited Cavite as one of the growing business fronts in the country.

He said the province, "with its geography, natural resources and the talent of its people," has an advantage in benefiting from the "economic boom radiating from an overly congested metropolis."

He said Cavite's high literacy rate was also a plus factor.

"Seeing great possibilities in our province, I brought along my key executives ... I told them to take a closer look at what Cavite has to offer ... I think this is the modest way of repaying our kindness and generosity," Tan said.

Tax case

Sought for comment on his tax refund case, Tan refused to answer queries from the INQUIRER.

Asked about his plans for the P25-billion tax evasion case that the government filed against him, Tan simply replied: "It's up to the court."

One of Tan's staff approached this writer and said a spokesperson for the business mogul would instead answer questions from the media.

But the spokesperson, a certain General Mison, also refused to accommodate an interview with the INQUIRER.

The same staffer just said that Tan's lawyer was busy preparing Tan's defense as they expected the government to appeal the case before the Supreme Court.

"All our lawyers are now readying pertinent documents that will support our claim that the government had indeed obtained excess taxes from Fortune Tobacco," the staffer, who asked not to be named, said.

He said among the pieces of evidence the Tan group would present were tax declarations of other tobacco and beverages companies, like San Miguel Corp., which allegedly "benefited" from the change from ad valorem to the specific tax system. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Better to pay taxes than interest

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

MY FAVORITE communist, Teddy Casiño, party-list representative of Bayan Muna, was the guest on a TV talk show the other day.

He was shedding crocodile tears over how Malacañang's plan to raise taxes to ease the fiscal crisis will impact on the poor.

He didn't mention that the communist NPA extorts "revolutionary taxes" from the poorest of the poor in the far-flung barrios.

Now that he is a congressman, he should work to abolish the dreaded tax.

Casiño joins the chorus of Conrado Villegas, Walden Bello, and Senators Ralph Recto and Mar Roxas, to mention only four, whose hearts, all of a sudden, are bleeding for the poor.

Considering the financial crisis we are in, going against the proposed taxes in order to cut the deficit is actually anti-poor.

For years, the banks have said that they have had to charge the highest interest rates in Asia because the government borrows most of the money in circulation, leaving little to lend out to the private sector.

By the law of supply and demand, the less money there is to lend, the higher the interest rate.

If the deficit is cut down by P150 billion as suggested by the 11 stalwarts of the UP School of Economics, then the government's borrowings will be reduced by this amount.

The banks will then be awash with P50 billion to lent out to the private sector. By the law of supply and demand, the interest rate should go down.

When the interest rate goes down, the cost of doing business will go down. Then, consumer prices should go down. Those with personal loans will have more pocket money to spend.

In the end, the taxpayer pays the additional taxes with his savings in interest.

And everybody, including the poor, who do not pay any taxes, will benefit by way of lower prices of consumer goods.

Of course, this is not automatic. Economics is not physics or mathematics. The human factor in economics just cannot be tied down to an unbending formula or equation.

Wiping the deficit will not automatically result in the lowering of interest rates. Not if the banking cartel can help it.

I would not be surprised if, even now, the cartel is already marshalling its forces in Congress and the Senate to block any measures for new taxes. If the tax measures are passed anyway, the cartel will surely whip its members in line to keep interests rates high. If this happens, the Bangko Sentral should intervene.

Let us hope that the governor will, at long last, stop being a commercial banker and start acting like a central banker.

The banks do not realize it, but lower interest rates will actually result in more business for them.

More people will borrow to expand business, buy homes, cars, and appliances.

There will be so much business the banks may not know how to handle it. There will also be less non-performing loans.

The banks should learn from the fire insurance industry. Ten years ago, the industry was fully liberalized. It was opened to the entry of foreigners. Also, the cartel, which had been operating for decades, was finally broken up.

The cartelized pricing of fire insurance was thrown out of the window. Today, 10 years later, fire insurance costs about one-fourth what it used to be.

And yet, business is doing better today than ever before.

Even if interest rates go down, will consumer prices also go down? Not if the producers' cartels can help it. There are all sorts of cartels lurking around. There are cartels in cement, pork, chicken, beef, rice and corn. The list is almost endless.

The government can break up these cartels by providing the atmosphere for free and open competition, even if it means allowing foreigners to come in.

The fly in the ointment is that, as more taxes are collected, Congress might expand the budget to provide bigger pork barrel funds, resulting in another fiscal crisis.

Then, that is the time for a Filipino Oliver Cromwell to barge into Congress with a troop of tanks to send all the congressmen home.

Before all these things happen, I would rather pay taxes to the government than interest to the bank.

Patriotism has nothing to do with this. It is pure pragmatism.

Interest is relentless and unforgiving. On the other hand, taxes are sometimes negotiable. If you are lucky, you may even be granted amnesty.

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- 14" TFT XGA+ Display (1024x768)
- Combo DVD + CDRW Drive
- 56K Modem, 10/100 LAN
- 2 USB Slots 2.0
- 4-in-1 Memory Card Reader
- Aprox. 2.8kg in weight
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P74,999.00

Q-Note M121W
- Intel® Centrino™ Mobile Technology
- Intel® Pentium® M Processor 715 (1.50GHz processor, 2MB L2 cache, 400 MHz FSB)
- Intel® 855GM Chipset
- Intel® PRO/Wireless 2200BG LAN 3B Mini PCI Adapter
- 256MB DDR Memory Special Upgrade to 512DDR Memory
- 40GB Hard Disk Drive
- 12.1" TFT WXGA Display (1280x800)
- Combo DVD + CDRW Drive
- 56K Modem, 10/100 LAN
- 2 x USB 2.0
- Aprox. 2Kg in weight with 8 cell battery
- 8 Cell Battery with up to 5.5 hrs.
- Infrared, Blue tooth, Built in Web Cam
- FREE! Carry Case

P75,999.00

Q-Note M37EW
- Intel® Centrino™ Mobile Technology
- Intel® Pentium® M Processor 715 (1.50GHz processor, 2MB L2 cache, 400 MHz FSB)
- Intel® 855PM Chipset
- Intel® PRO/Wireless 2200BG LAN 3B Mini PCI Adapter
- ATI Mobility Radeon M11 with 128MB Video Memory
- 256MB DDR Memory
- 40GB Hard Disk Drive
- 15.4" TFT WUXGA+ Wide Display (1920x1200)
- Combo DVD + CDRW Drive
- 56K Modem, 10/100 LAN
- 3 x USB 2.0, 1 x 1394 Firewire port
- Aprox. 2.85Kg in weight
- Built in Web Cam
- 4-in-1 Memory Card Reader
- FREE! Carry Case

P84,999.00

Q-Note Z500N
- Intel® Centrino™ Mobile Technology
- Intel® Pentium® M Processor 715 (1.50GHz processor, 2MB L2 cache, 400 MHz FSB)
- Intel® 855PM Chipset
- Intel® PRO/Wireless 2200BG LAN 3B Mini PCI Adapter
- ATI Mobility Radeon 9600 with 64MB Video Memory
- 256MB DDR Memory
- 40GB Hard Disk Drive
- 15" TFT XGA+ Display (1024x768)
- DVD RW +/- Dual Drive
- 56K Modem, 10/1000 LAN
- 4 x USB 2.0, 1 x 1394 Firewire port
- 4-in-1 Memory Card Reader
- Aprox. 2.85Kg in weight
- FREE! Carry Case

P84,999.00

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MOBILE TECHNOLOGY

RP banks lending more to small, medium firms

By Doris C. Dumlao

PHILIPPINE banks had lent more funds to small and medium enterprises than the minimum 8 percent the law requires, according to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

BSP Deputy Governor for bank supervision and examination Alberto Reyes said that based on the latest SME lending report, banks were "overcomplying" with the requirements under the Magna Carta for SMEs.

The SME law requires banks to set aside 6 percent of their total loan portfolio to "small" enterprises and another 2 percent for "medium" enterprises.

Small enterprises are defined as those with capital of between P1.5 million and P15 million, while medium enterprises are capitalized from P15 million to P60 million.

SMEs make up about 99.5 percent of all manufacturing and service establishments and account for almost 67 percent of the country's employment.

Considered the backbone of the domestic economy, the sector contributes about a third of the value-added in production sector.

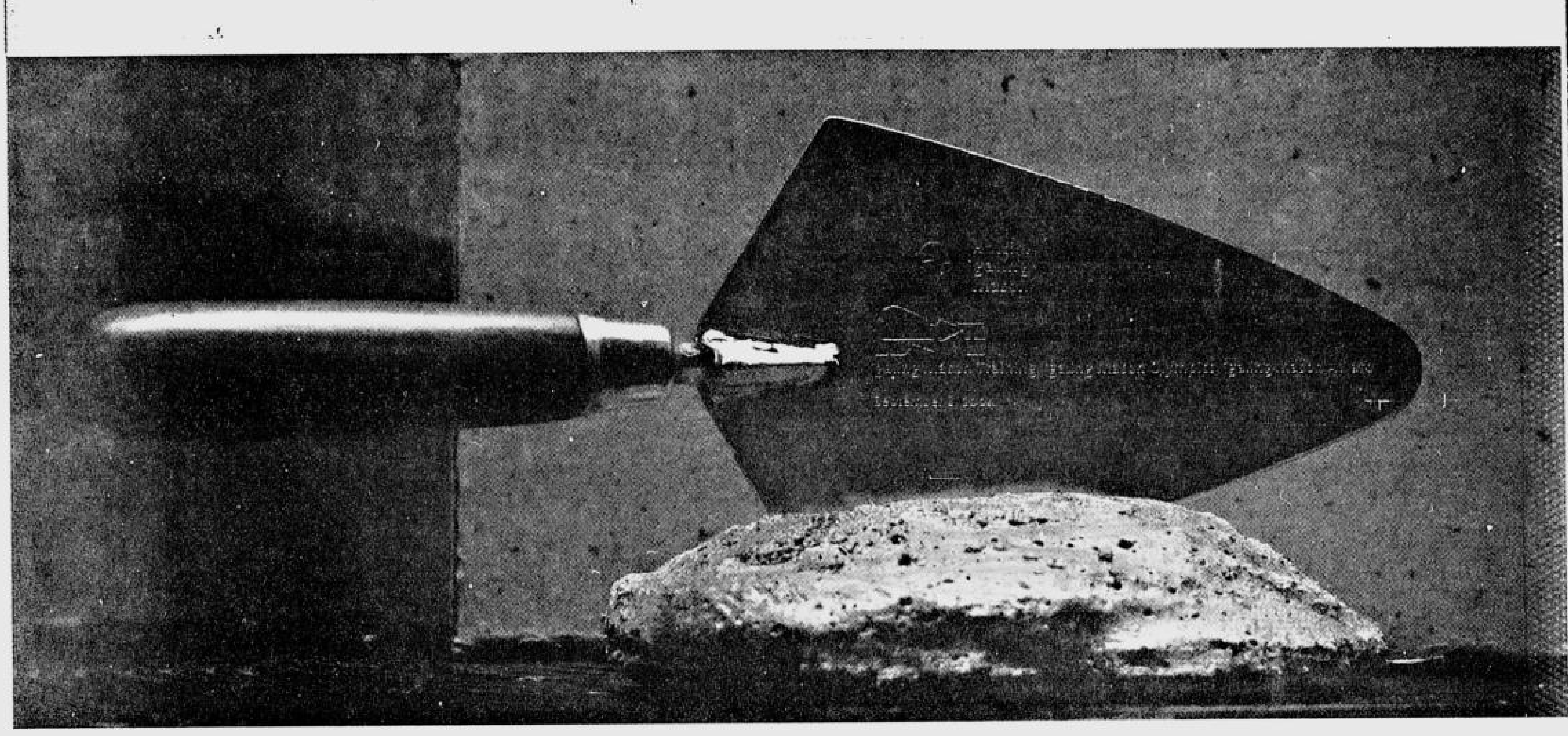
As of March 31 this year, Reyes said the banking sector had directly lent 11.3 percent to small enterprises and 9.97 percent to medium enterprises.

He said the share given to small enterprises during the first quarter of the year amounted to P116.76 billion, marking a 1.1 percent increase from the lending to the same sector in the fourth quarter of 2003.

During the same comparative period, lending to medium enterprises dipped by 0.79 percent to P104.61 billion.

To ensure that banks met the mandatory credit requirements, the BSP closely monitors their compliance and imposes sanctions on violators.

Holcim Group



Share the power to build

UCC launches the Holcim 'galing Mason Program

MESSAGES

My cordial greetings to the people behind the "Holcim 'galing Mason" program.

The primary objective of the "Holcim 'galing Mason" program which is to enhance the knowledge and skills of masons through basic and advanced masonry training and skills certification is very timely as we try to generate millions of jobs for our people.

I am very pleased that you have decided to make skills training as the focus of your initiative because indeed, education is the most lasting gift that we can share with people.

We can now look forward to an industry filled with knowledgeable, highly-skilled, and motivated masons that play an important role in nation-building, and who are sought after in many parts of the world.

Mabuhay!

Signed Gloria Arroyo

Hon. GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO
President
Republic of the Philippines

In behalf of the men and women of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, I would like to express my sincerest greetings to Union Cement Corporation (UCC) for today's launch of its flagship corporate social responsibility program, the "Holcim 'galing Mason."

"Holcim 'galing Mason" is yet another ground-breaking initiative in skills development, certification, and jobs generation that brings together the expertise from the business community, civil society, and the public sector. UCC, a member of the Holcim Group, has found the best partners in the implementation of "Holcim 'galing Mason –TESDA, the Philippine Construction Association, and the National Union of Building and Construction Workers.

While the UCC shared the best concrete technology, TESDA is collaborating with the PCA in designing the training program based on the latest training regulations. The NUBCW, on the other hand, is responsible for the work values component of the program.

The four key partners have put in their expertise in line with program development, training design, program implementation, development of assessment tools, and selling the program to the target clientele. The final product of the team was nothing less than the right mix of job skills and work attitudes components designed to produce quality masons.

We at TESDA are very proud to take part in this noble endeavor of enhancing the knowledge and skills of masons, and to promote the image of masons – the group of people instrumental in laying the foundation – literally – of homes, roads, and offices. Through "Holcim 'galing Mason," we share with masons the power to build and we lead them towards decent work.
Congratulations to UCC!
Mabuhay ang "Holcim 'galing Mason!

Signed:

Hon. Augusto Boboy Syjuco
Director General
TESDA (Technical Education and Skills Development Authority)

Over the last 50 years, the Philippine Constructors Association – the oldest trade organization in the country – has always been at the forefront for the continued development of the construction industry. Thus, when Union Cement Corporation conceived the "Holcim 'galing Mason" program, the PCA immediately saw that it had a role to play in order for UCC to attain its noble objective to enhance the knowledge and skills of masons, promote the image of the masonry trade, and give recognition to outstanding masons.

Needless to say that, for us in the construction industry, masons are very critical. They form part of the team that lay the foundation for homes, bridges, landmark infrastructures, and buildings where families, organizations, and economies are built. At the crux of our partnership with UCC is the desire not only to develop the skills of masons but also to instill the values of construction safety, efficiency, and pride among masons. Furthermore, we need to maintain a pool of skilled masons that can support the construction industry.

In behalf of the PCA, I express my warmest congratulations to UCC for this relevant corporate social responsibility project. "Holcim 'galing Mason" will definitely help raise the quality level of work of Filipino masons, which in the long-run would result in safer homes and roads in the country or overseas where the Filipino workforce may carve yet another niche.

The PCA vision to be an agent of change for the continuous improvement of standards and practices to achieve a sustainable and globally competitive construction industry is well supported by "Holcim 'galing Mason" Thus, we are very proud and very grateful for this opportunity to be a key partner of UCC.
Mabuhay ang "Holcim 'galing Mason!

Signed

Emilio J. Tumbocon
President
Philippine Constructors Associate

It is our overarching interest to give dignity to those human beings who build through their hands' the nation's monumental landmarks and edifices that serve as human shelter and infrastructure link to our economic act. The collective effort of Union Cement Corporation, the Philippine Constructors Association, and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority to recognize masons is definitely worth appreciating.

In a more competitive environment, the unselfish push to upgrade the skills level of Filipino masons through "Holcim 'galing Mason" program ultimately benefit us in the industry without any reservation. The National Union of Building and Construction Workers is grateful for having a contribution to the "Holcim 'galing Mason" program.

In behalf of the NUBCW, Mabuhay kayong mga mason! Mabuhay ang "Holcim 'galing Mason" program!

Signed

Arwin Villamin
National President
NUBCW (National Union of Building and Construction Workers)

The launch of the Holcim 'galing Mason program shows our commitment to play an important role in the sustainable development of the Philippines. As the leading cement company in the country, we recognize our responsibility to help the Filipino workforce gain skills and find jobs to be able to live a quality life.

As our flagship corporate social responsibility program, 'galing Mason, aims to enhance the knowledge and skills of masons through basic and advanced masonry training and skills certification. The program also seeks to promote the image of the masons and give recognition to skilled and outstanding masons.

With our partners namely the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, the Philippine Constructors Association, and the National Union of Building and Construction Workers, we are confident that 'galing Mason will attain its objectives and serve as a positive force in developing the skills and competitiveness of Filipino masons here and abroad.

The pilot implementation of 'galing Mason last year yielded very rewarding results. All of the 400 masons trained are now better skilled, motivated, and more employable – in fact, half of them are now paid masons. Truly, the Filipino worker has great potential and with public and private sector working together, this potential can be set free for the benefit of the country.

On behalf of the management and staff of Holcim-UCC, I express my profound gratitude to all our partners in 'galing Mason. May this program serve as a testament of our fervent commitment to a long-term and meaningful partnership with the Philippine society.

Signed

Paul M. O'Callaghan
Chief Operating Officer
Union Cement Corporation

BUILDING WORLD-CLASS BUILDERS

UCC launches Holcim 'galing Mason Program

Corporate social responsibility is one of the cornerstones of Union Cement Corporation's (UCC) strategic and sustainable business direction. As the leading cement manufacturer in the Philippines, UCC's commitment to be an active force in promoting social and economic progress goes beyond jobs generation and manufacturing industry leadership.

UCC takes its commitment one step further with the launch of the Holcim 'galing Mason program, a project that aims to enhance the knowledge and skills of masons – those who level, form, and shape concrete structures such as houses and buildings, roads and bridges, monuments and architectural masterpieces.

In addition to raising the skills level of masons, the 'galing Mason program seeks to achieve at least three more objectives: (1) enhance the employability of Filipino masons; (2) recognize skilled and outstanding masons; and (3) promote the image of masons.

"The program is consistent with our corporate social responsibility thrust to focus on education: not just for children but also skills development for adults so they will be more employable and more productive people in their community and in the construction industry," says Paul M. O'Callaghan, UCC chief executive officer.

UCC brings together the strengths of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) through the guidance of TESDA NCR and NITVET offices, Philippine Constructors Association (PCA) through the active participation of its Executive Director Manolito Madrasto, and the National Union of Building and Construction Workers (NUBCW) through its Secretary General Meynardo Palarca in defining the competency standards, development of training curriculum and assessment tool for the implementation of 'galing Mason program.

" We have found the best partners to guarantee that 'galing Mason will attain its objectives and serve as a positive force in developing skills and competitiveness of Filipino masons," O'Callaghan laments.

The main components of the 'galing Mason program are: 'galing Mason Training, which serves as the core project component focusing on the enhancement of skills of masons; 'galing Mason Olympics, which showcases the masons' skills through various levels of competition; and 'galing Mason Award, which seeks to give due recognition to outstanding masons around the country.

Training world-class Filipino masons

The 7-day 'galing Mason Training program, which is open to prospective, new or uncertified masons, offers skills training, assessment, and skills certification. The program curriculum, which is training cum production, was designed for the masons to learn the appropriate masonry trade and expertise, possess a positive work values and attitude and appropriate application of concrete technology.

"To be a good mason, one needs a good grasp of both theory and practice. With theoretical instruction on technology and skills, the worker-trainees job performance would improve greatly after completion of the training," says Augusto Syjuco, TESDA director-general.

The 'galing Mason Training Program is free. Throughout the 7-day course, the masons will be provided with free masonry tools, t-shirt, and meals. They also get to earn a training allowance while they learn and participate in the construction of houses, schools, and other community facilities.

After the training, the apprentices will undergo skills assessment to determine their mastery of the required skills and competencies of a mason. Those who will successfully pass the trade test are issued the appropriate certificate of competencies or national trade skills certificates.

Paul O'Callaghan (center) with TESDA Officers and guests

Presentation of the first 'galing Mason training roll out awardee, Carlito Pascua of Taguig

'galing Mason MOA signing (l-r) Emilio Tumbocon (PCA), Arwin Villamil (NUBCW), Sec Boboy Syjuco (TESDA) and Paul O'Callaghan (UCC)

Displaying Filipino masons skills and artistry

To produce a new breed of highly skilled masons who are artistic, energetic, and well-motivated, UCC launches the 'galing Mason Olympics, a skills challenge among skilled masons. The 'galing Mason Olympics is open to masons certified by TESDA within or outside the 'galing Mason Training. The competition has four levels: the Regional Olympics, the National Olympics, and sponsorships to the ASEAN Olympics, and the World Olympics.

At international masonry skills challenges, the spotlight is not only focused on the skills of young masons but also on careers in the masonry industry. One of the key goals of international masonry skills competitions is to raise the level of appreciation and interest for the age-old craft amongst young people.

Recognizing outstanding Filipino masons

Masons especially in the Philippines, are oftentimes undervalued. This is unfortunate since masonry is one the highest forms of art and its contributions to society last for generations. The Egyptian Pyramids, the Colosseum in Rome, the Great Wall of China – are only some of the world's architectural works of art that were built with masonry.

"As a blue-collar job, masonry fails to get the amount of recognition that it richly deserves," says O'Callaghan. UCC aims to recognize exemplary Filipino masons and restore the value and appreciation for the classic art of masonry among Filipinos through the Holcim 'galing Mason Award.

"Through the 'galing Mason Award, we look forward to a new generation of Filipinos who have high respects for masons and for the enduring craft that is masonry," says O'Callaghan.

The 'galing Mason Award is an annual search open to all masons all over the country. The search will commence in October this year, in time for the nationwide rollout of the 'galing Mason program.

The pilot implementation of the 'galing Mason Training Program which ran from September 2003 to March 2004, has produced at least 400 newly trained masons across five regions of the country. These masons have helped build 16 housing units for Habitat for Humanity and Gawad Kalinga, two school buildings, and three TESDA training centers, among others.

UCC strengthens commitment to Habitat for Humanity

For more than five years now, UCC has continuously supported Habitat for Humanity projects. UCC's stronger commitment to the organization makes 'galing Mason more relevant and beneficial.

In addition to material support, Habitat benefits from the services that the 'galing Mason apprentices will provide. Habitat project sites serve as one of the areas for 'galing Mason trainings so as to provide free labor and some construction materials.

On the week of the launch event, 40 Habitat masons all over Metro Manila were trained at the Taguig Habitat site.

Holcim Group

UCC is a member of Holcim, one of the world's leading suppliers of cement, as well as aggregates, concrete and construction-related services with interests in over 70 countries in all continents.

Gov't asked to help keep sugar prices stable

THE SUGAR industry, through the Confederation of Sugar Producers Association (Confed), is seeking the government's intervention in preventing sugar mill gate prices from skidding to unprofitable levels in view of surplus production.

In a letter to Sugar Regulatory Authority Administrator James Christopher Ledesma, Confed, which claims to be the largest group of sugar producers in the country, specifically sought the allocation of P1 billion to fund the government's sugar buying operations. Confed wants the support price for sugar set at not less than P700 per 50-kilogram bag.

Confed is projecting sugar production to reach 2.28 million metric tons during the current crop year (September 2004 to August 2005), up from 2.06 million metric tons in the last crop year.

"They (Confed) fear that the additional production of 410,00 will put substantial pressure on the mill gate prices of sugar," said Ledesma in an interview Friday.

Ledesma also noted that the previous year's sugar inventory stood at 410,000 metric tons.

The cost of producing sugar was placed at P400 to P500 per 50-kg bag.

Ledesma said he had forwarded the petition of the sugar producers to Agriculture Secretary Yap for approval and endorsement to Malacañang.

Malacañang intervened through the National Food Authority, which bought about 70,000 metric tons of sugar at P700 to P720 per 50-kg bag. *Christine A. Gaylican*

COST-CUTTING MEASURES

Napocor posts ₱13B in savings

By Abigail L. Ho

SELF-IMPOSED cost-cutting initiatives, including more efficient plant operations and the use of cheaper fuel alternatives, enabled debt-ridden National Power Corp. to save more than P13 billion last year.

Napocor data showed that P6.76 billion in savings came from properly prioritizing projects under its 2003 expenditure program.

Another P1.93 billion in savings was generated through the reduction of the agency's operational expenses.

While prioritizing key projects and cutting down on internal expenditures, Napocor also worked on improving the efficiency of its plants.

Last year, Napocor was able to bring down the heat rate of its Luzon power plants to 9,717 British thermal units per kilowatt-hour (Btu/kWh) from 9,829 Btu/kWh in 2002.

Also, its forced outage rate went down to only 2.58 percent in 2003 from 3.42 percent in the previous year.

As a result of these more efficient power plant operations, Napocor was able to realize savings of as much as P1.46 billion.

Napocor also opted to use more Indonesian coal to fuel its coal-fired power plants, giving it savings of around P240 million. Indonesian coal is usually cheaper than Chinese coal, which the state firm used in the past.

Another P220 million in savings came from the power firm's use of more coal from Semirara mines, jacking up local coal volume use to 1.5 million metric tons (MT) in 2003 from 1.2 million MT in 2002.

The cash-strapped power company likewise started blending imported coal with the local variety in its Sual plant in Pangasinan and Masinloc plant in Zambales.

The other measures that enabled Napocor to realize savings were the use of the electronic bidding system for its fuel requirements, the employment of the economic load dispatching system and the reduction of its personnel.

The e-bidding system allowed the state firm to get more competitive bids from fuel suppliers, thus giving it the best value for its money.

The economic load dispatching system meant that Napocor prioritized the use of power plants that were cheaper to run.

Also in 2003, the state firm continued to implement manpower reduction measures that brought down the number of employees from 8,000 in 2001 to only 3,700 in 2003.

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11% INTEREST
10 YEARS TO PAY

LAS PIÑAS CITY

UCPB - COMML BLDG
L.A. 280sqm F.A 660sqm
EDLI Apartelles, 11 Rose Ave., Pilar Village, Almanza
Minimum Bid Price P 5.040.000 00

UCPB - COMML LOT
L.A. 855sqm
Brgy Zapote, Las Piñas City
Minimum Bid Price P 5.771.250 00

UCPB - COMML LOT
L.A. 1,077sqm
Brgy Zapote Las Piñas City
Minimum Bid Price P 7 269 750 00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 216sqm F.A 101 5sqm
No 16 Skyrot St Moonwalk Vil
Minimum Bid Price P 870,000 00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A 321sqm F.A 190sqm
Daisy St Vergonville Subd
Minimum Bid Price P 1,000 000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 240sqm
Lot 4 Block 12 Chromium Road, Pilar Village
Minimum Bid Price: P 850,000 00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A 141sqm 85sqm
Unit 5 Estanislao St
BF Resort Village
Minimum Bid Price P 1,475,000.00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 280sqm F.A 303 12sqm
No 20 Polasapis Road
Pilar Village
Minimum Bid Price P 2.890,000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 292sqm
Pamplona Las Piñas
Minimum Bid Price P 1,182,600 00

UCPB - CONDO UNIT
F.A 40 48sqm
4th Floor Wing B Lingayen Bldg
Coastal Plaza Condo
Minimum Bid Price P 540.000 00

CALOOCAN CITY

UCPB - COMML BLDG (5 storey)
L.A. 200sqm F.A 875sqm
195 G Luna corner Lakas ng Mahihirap St
Minimum Bid Price P 3,860,000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 240sqm
Along Coaster St
Bayanville Subd
Minimum Bid Price P 430,000 00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 150sqm F.A 174sqm
Adelaida St
Vista Verde North Ph. I-F
Minimum Bid Price P 1,160,000 00

MANILA CITY

UCPB - OLD APT BLDG
L.A. 101sqm
No 2013 A- C Silahis St.
Sta Ana, Manila
Minimum Bid Price P 1,080 000 00

UCPB - OLD APT BLSG
L.A. 571 2 sqm
1427 Looban St., Paco, Manila
Minimum Bid Price P 12.000 000 00

UCPB - APT BLDG (3-STOREY)
L.A. 361sqm
706 Interior St., San Marcelino
Minimum Bid Price P 4.430 000 00

UCPB - COMML LOT W/ STRCTRE
L.A 1 758 80sqm
Galang Medical Center, Batangas St
Minimum Bid Price P 29.015,910 00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 150sqm
No 2089 F Benitez St., Malate
Minimum Bid Price P 4,950.000 00

UCPB - COMML LOT
L.A. 832 7sqm
No 2244 Taft Avenue, Malate
Minimum Bid Price P 27 163 200 00

UCPB - OLD HOUSE & LOT
L.A 120sqm
No 2043 Anonas St.
Sta Mesa, Manila
Minimum Bid Price P 1,630 000 00

MAKATI CITY

UCPB - RSDL LOT W/ IMPRVT
L.A. 360sqm
No 4055 Yague St.
Maria Dela Paz Village
Minimum Bid Price P 5,940 000 00

UCPB - CONDO UNIT
F.A 129 67sqm
Unit No 305 3rd Floor, Ciano Plaza Condo Corp
Minimum Bid Price P 2 660,000 00

UCPB - COMML LOT
L.A. 478sqm
Kalayaan cor Kawit St.
Sta Cruz, Makati
Minimum Bid Price P 11,950,000 00

UCPB - COMML LOT
L.A 201sqm
Newton St. Brgy San Isidro
Minimum Bid Price P 4 020,000 00

UCPB - COMML LOT
L.A. 317sqm
1765- 1767 Garcia St.(Reposo)
San Miguel
Minimum Bid Price P 38.547 482 00

UCPB - CONDO UNIT
F.A 36 36sqm
Palm Tower, St Paul St
San Antonio Village
Minimum Bid Price P 1 204 243 20

UCPB - COMML LOT
L.A. 1,580sqm
No 265 Vito Cruz ext. corner Onyx St. La Paz
Minimum Bid Price P 50.560.000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT W/ OLD HOUSE
L.A 746 sqm
19 Paseo De Roxas ext.
Bel- Air Village
Minimum Bid Price P 26 185,000 00

UCPB - CONDO UNIT
F.A. 60sqm
Olympia Tower, Makati Ave
Minimum Bid Price P 3 600 000 00

UCPB - CONDO UNIT
F.A 21 36sqm
Unit 414 4th flr Asia Mansion I
Dela Rosa St
Minimum Bid Price P 970 000 00

MALABON CITY

UCPB - RDLDLOT
L.A. 115sqm
Nickel St., Goldendale Village, Tinajeros
Minimum Bid Price P 1,090.000 00

MANDALUYONG

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 312sqm w/ 2-STOREY
No 274 Sta Lucia St Plainview
Minimum Bid Price P 5,150 000 00

UCPB - CONDO UNIT
F.A 65 33sqm
Unit 507, Sierra Madre St., Ark Condo
Minimum Bid Price P 1 340,571 60

UCPB - PENTHOUSE
F.A. 125sqm
Sierra Madre St Ark Condo
Minimum Bid Price P 2 698 644 60

ALABANG, MUNTINLUPA

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 10 000sqm, F.A 1,217 92sqm
517 Acacia Ave
Minimum Bid Price. P132,350.000 00

NAVOTAS CITY

UCPB - COMML LOT
L.A. 5 593sqm
379 Gov A Pascual St San Jose
Minimum Bid Price P 12,300,000 00

PASAY CITY

UCPB - PENTHOUSE
F.A. 290 sqm
Unit 1502 15th Floor Marbella 1, No 223 Roxas Blvd
Minimum Bid Price P 5 256 000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 195 sqm
No 61 E Verdadero Street, District of Maibay
Minimum Bid Price P 1 176,000 00

PARAÑAQUE CITY

UCPB - CONDO UNIT W/ PARKING
F.A. 144 70sqm
Unit 908 9th flr
Chateau de Baie Condo
Minimum Bid Price P 4,025,000.00

UCPB - TOWN HOUSE
L.A. 226sqm, F.A 153 6sqm
VJ Town Homes, BF Classic
Villamor St
Minimum Bid Price P 2,480 000 00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 417sqm, F.A 877 50sqm
Bethsaida St. Multinational Village
Minimum Bid Price P 7 290 000 00

UCPB - CONDO UNIT w/ PARKING
F.A. 184sqm
Unit 207 Andalucia Bldg
Bella Villa I, Merville
Minimum Bid Price P 4,070,000 00

UCPB - TOWN HOUSE w/ PARKING
L.A. 103sqm F.A 185 88sqm
Unit 28-B, Int Yellowstone St
South Green Park Village
Minimum Bid Price P 2,430,000 00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 563sqm
20-A Jose Abad Santos, Bayview Village.
Minimum Bid Price P 7 970 000 00

QUEZON CITY

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 48 95sqm
Heart of the City
Condo Sct Albano
Minimum Bid Price P 1,580,000.00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 690sqm
41 Sct Limbaga Street.
Minimum Bid Price P 13 400,000 00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 690sqm
44 Zaragosa Street Araneta Vill
Minimum Bid Price P 7 735 000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 241sqm
47 Mercury Drive.
Tierra Gloria Subd.,
Minimum Bid Price P 4,275,000 00

UCPB - RSDL BLDG
L.A. 540sqm
Lot 6 Blk 2 Richland Street, Richland 5 Subd., Sauyo
Minimum Bid Price P 3,380,000.00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 182sqm
Sentosa Heights, Sct Bayoran, South Triangle
Minimum Bid Price P 7,460,000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 181 5sqm
No Agoo Street.
New Haven Subd.,
Minimum Bid Price P 990,000.00

UCPB - RSDL W/ IMPRVT
L.A. 95sqm
No 17 -A Camiling Street, MIA Subd.
Minimum Bid Price P 832.500 00

UCPB - 3 VACANT LOT
L.A. 44sqm
No 30 Rd 14 Project 8,
Minimum Bid Price P 484,000 00

UCPB - UNFNSHD RSLD BLDG
L.A. 102sqm
364 P Rivera Street, Brgy Sangandaan,
Minimum Bid Price P 1,780,000 00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 281sqm
Bighani cor Flores de Mayo St
Minimum Bid Price P 3 250 000 00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 800 sqm (3 LEVELS)
No 60 Highland Drive, Bluendge
Minimum Bid Price P 16 920,000 00

UCPB - CONDO W/ PARKING
F.A 120 17sqm
Jade Place Condo, Visayas Avenue,
Minimum Bid Price P 3,170 000 00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A 339sqm F.A 241sqm
No 133 M. Fairweather Street, Filinvest
Minimum Bid Price P 3,900,000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT W/ IMPRVT
L.A. 54sqm
Unit 18 Malachi St
Dionisio Royale Exe
Minimum Bid Price P 1,440 000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 300sqm
Cambridge St. Vista Real Classica
Minimum Bid Price P 1,170 000 00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 496sqm, F.A 188sqm
No 1 Pearl cor Fairlane East, Fairview Park
Minimum Bid Price: P 2,350,000 00

UCPB - CONDO UNIT
F.A 62 90 sqm
Adelina 2 Condominium Columbia
Minimum Bid Price P 1.530,000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 152 60sqm
62 Gen Lim Street, Heroes Hill
Minimum Bid Price P 1,670 000 00

UCPB - 8 DOOR APT
L.A. 465 sqm F.A 443sqm
Banlat St. Carmel Subd. Tandang Sora
Minimum Bid Price. P 4,920 000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 130sqm
Rolex St cor Buhusa St
Charbel Subd Ph I
Minimum Bid Price P 1,100,000 00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 586sqm F.A 562sqm
44 Zaragosa St Araneta Village
Minimum Bid Price P 7,735,000 00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 103sqm
Moses St. Goodwill Home Ph 2 Bagbag Nov
Minimum Bid Price P 2,376,000 00

UCPB - TOWN HOUSE
L.A 343 125sqm
10th St New Manila Q C
Minimum Bid Price P 11,290,000 00

UCPB - CONDO UNIT
F.A 53sqm
Unit 209 2nd flr
Prince Jun Condo
Minimum Bid Price P 1,410,000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A 3 139sqm
Green Meadows Ave
Green Meadow Subd
Minimum Bid Price P 48 532,000 00

GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 600sqm F.A 342sqm
443 Duke St Greenhills East
Minimum Bid Price P 17,493 000 00

UCPB - OFFICE CONDO
F.A 279 sqm
Goldhill Tower, Condominium Annapolis Street
Minimum Bid Price P 11,808 000 00

UCPB - OFFICE CONDO
F.A 138 32sqm
Atlanta Center, Greenhills, Annapolis St
Minimum Bid Price P 11.808,000 00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 926sqm
31 cor Madison & Polk St., North Greenhills
Minimum Bid Price P 38,496,000 00

PASIG CITY

UCPB - CONDO UNIT
F.A 224sqm (w/ yard area)
4th floor Park Chateau Cor Garnet & Sapphire Sts
Minimum Bid Price P 5,670 000 00

UCPB - TOWN HOUSE
L.A 64 92sqm
Unit 302 4th floor, Hampton Gardens Phase 1
Minimum Bid Price P 1,415,000.00

UCPB - HOUSE LOT
L.A 257sqm F.A 398sqm
No 6 Lualhati St
Dona Damana Subd Rosario
Minimum Bid Price P 1,910,700 00

ANTIPOLO

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A 179 sqm
Ubas St
Town & Country Exec Village
Minimum Bid Price. P 710 000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A 834sqm
Selford Street, Town & Country Estates
Minimum Bid Price P 2 853,000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A 350sqm
Sandringham Street, Barrington Place
Minimum Bid Price P 1.219,500 00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A 185sqm F.A 164sqm
Coolidge St. Cuest Verde Executive Village
Minimum Bid Price P 1,180,000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A 610sqm
Mount Everest Fairmont Hills
Minimum Bid Price P 1 540,000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A 437sqm
Parkridge Executive Village
Bo Mayamot
Minimum Bid Price P 793,260 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A 1 151sqm
Town & Country Estates, Bo Mayamot
Minimum Bid Price P 3,936,600 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 180sqm w/ unfinished house
Fatima Village Bo San Isidro
Minimum Bid Price P 235,000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A 300sqm
New York Bend
Palos Verdes Subd
Minimum Bid Price P 875 000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A 304sqm
Cottonwoods Heights
Minimum Bid Price. P 1,155,200 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A 240sqm
Foliage Hills
Minimum Bid Price: P 912,000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 346sqm
Hills of Mata Alta Bo Dalig
Minimum Bid Price P 1,217,000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A 1 004sqm
Brgy Rd Brgy. May - iba Teresa
Minimum Bid Price P 1,557,000 00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 110sqm F.A 72sqm
San Remo Hills of Mata Alta
Minimum Bid Price P 1.000 000 00

UCPB - COMML LOT
L.A. 750sqm
Marcos Hi -Way Brgy Mayamot
Minimum Bid Price P 7.500 000 00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 192sqm F.A 120sqm
#8 Mayon St.,
Town & Country Hills
Minimum Bid Price. P 935,000 00

CAINTA/ TAYATAY/ ANGONO

UCPB - RSDL LOT W/ IMPRVT
L.A. 976sqm
Noel Subd., Brgy Dolores Taytay
Minimum Bid Price P 843 264 00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 240 sqm F.A 2087sqm
Wilkamburg St
Richmond Subd Angono
Minimum Bid Price P 1,890.000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 204sqm
Village East III, Darangan Binangonan
Minimum Bid Price: P 408,000 00

UCPB -RSDL LOT
L.A 216 sqm
Saratoga & Monterey
Park Place Village Cainta
Minimum Bid Price P 540,000 00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 205sqm F.A 99sqm
Bucharest St. Eastville Cainta
Minimum Bid Price P 1,320 000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 345sqm
No 7 Yakal St
Doña Justas Subd Angono
Minimum Bid Price. P 585,000 00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 805 sqm F.A 357 5sqm
Dona Justina cor. Dona Juliana
Filinvest Home
Minimum Bid Price: P 7,800,000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 524 sqm
#151 Ilang - Ilang St.,
Nieves Hills Subd., Angono
Minimum Bid Price P 1,100,000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 230 226sqm
along Feeder Rd.,
Bo Guinang Bayan
Minimum Bid Price P 11.500 000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 216sqm
Monterey & Saratoga St.,
Park Place
Minimum Bid Price P 540.000 00

BULACAN

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 161sqm
Opel St Vilacor Vil.,
Bo Langka Meycauayan
Minimum Bid Price. P 2,880,000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 1 152 sqm
along Sampaguita Area C, Sapang Palay
Minimum Bid Price. P 567,000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 221sqm
3rd Street, Bo., Fatima, Sapang Palay SJDM
Minimum Bid Price P 360,000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 2 912sqm
along Barangay Rd
Bo Sta Rosa II Marilao
Minimum Bid Price P 2,500 000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 50 sqm
Ayukit Street Bo Binang 2nd & Turo Bocaue
Minimum Bid Price P 100,000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 205sqm
Ayukit Street Bo Binang 2nd & Turo Bocaue
Minimum Bid Price P 410 000 00

UCPB - IND'S FACTORY
L.A. 22 311 48sqm F.A VARIOUS
Northwest Line of Provincial Rd
Bo Patubig
Minimum Bid Price P 38 740,000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 361sqm
Bo Tabing Ilog Palo, Marilao
Minimum Bid Price P 72,000 00

UCPB - TOWN HOUSE
L.A. 60sqm, F.A 58 93sqm
Stanley St., cor Macagems St.
Stanleyville Malolos
Minimum Bid Price 690,000 00

UCPB - COMML LOT
L.A 444sqm
Mc Highway
Bo Burol 1st Balagtas
Minimum Bid Price P 10 490 000 00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 209sqm
Avocado St Area F,
Bo Sapang Palay
Minimum Bid Price P 400,000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 180sqm
Bo Cangin Malolos
Minimum Bid Price P 414 000 00

CAVITE CITY

UCPB - VACANT LOT
L.A 589sqm
Southwoods Ave Manila Southwood Carmona
Minimum Bid Price P 2,592,000 00

UCPB - CONDOTEL
L.A 182 88sqm
Southwoods Villa Carmona
Minimum Bid Price P 4.773.168 00

UCPB - RESORT BLDG
L.A 1 238sqm w/ POOL
Villa Ramirez Subd
Bo Tabon Kawit
Minimum Bid Price P 4 190.000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A 244sqm
Astro ready Mix Palico Imus
Minimum Bid Price P 461,160 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A 1024sqm
Astro Ready Mix, Palico Imus
Minimum Bid Price P 1 198,080 00

UCPB - COMML LOT
L.A 4 995sqm
Macaria Business Center, Bo Poblacion
Minimum Bid Price P 40,491 900 00

UCPB - DUPLEX
L.A 80sqm F.A 27sqm
Molino Park Homes Dasmarinas
Minimum Bid Price P 637 550 00

UCPB - CONDOTEL/RESORT
F.A 71sqm
Vista De Loro Heights
Puerto Azul
Minimum Bid Price P 1.870,000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A 615sqm
Manila Southwoods, Cabilang Baybay, Carmona
Minimum Bid Price P 1,935,000 00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A 144sqm F.A 80sqm
Via Velana St. Milano Citta Italiana, Mambog
Minimum Bid Price P 1.500.000 00

UCPB - INDSL LOT
L.A 7 079sqm
Bo Niog II Bacoor
Minimum Bid Price P 6 585,000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A 486sqm
Manila Southwoods, Carmona
Minimum Bid Price P 2,430 000 00

BIÑAN/ SAN PEDRO & STA. ROSA

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A 150sqm
Town & Country Southville Binan
Minimum Bid Price P 292 500 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A 209sqm
Town & Country Southville Binan
Minimum Bid Price P 428 450 00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A 782sqm (2-storey)
Bo Pooc Sta Rosa
Minimum Bid Price P 2 057 753 89

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A 142sqm, F.A 74sqm
Rosewood La Marea Hills
Minimum Bid Price P 1,520,000 00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A 195sqm F.A 84sqm
Village. San Jose Sta Rosa
Minimum Bid Price P 1,100,000 00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A 155sqm F.A 95sqm
Rosal St El Vinda Village Phase I
Minimum Bid Price P 835 000 00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A 150sqm, F.A 109sqm
Aurora Ave Aurora Height Subd
Minimum Bid Price P 825,000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A 150sqm
Via Venezia cor Via Verona St
Romaville Subd
Minimum Bid Price P 525,000 00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A 370sqm F.A 164sqm
Maharlika St United San Pedro
Minimum Bid Price P 2.700 000 00

TAGAYTAY CITY

UCPB - CONDO UNIT
F.A 160 25sqm
Unit 128 Leighton Garden Condo
Minimum Bid Price P 3,380,000 00

UCPB - VACANT LOT
L.A 11 572sqm
Bo Maharlika East, Tagaytay
Minimum Bid Price P 18,900 000 00

LAGUNA

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A 480sqm
Caliraya Lake Resort Subd Phase II, Bo Lewin
Minimum Bid Price P 250,000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 200 sqm
Along Road Lot 6, Marymount Village Phase 3
Minimum Bid Price P 2,038,000 00

UCPB - COMML LOT
L.A 1 440sqm
Diversion Rd Grand Riviera Subd, Bulihan Sur
Minimum Bid Price P 14 750.000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A 300sqm
Diversion Rd, Bulihan Sur Pila
Minimum Bid Price P 9,600 000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A 300sqm
Magnolia cor Ilang-ilang Street
Villa Adelina III
Minimum Bid Price P 621,000 00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A 1,982 sqm
Conrado Street, Manno Subd., San Lucas
Minimum Bid Price P 4,225,000 00

UCPB - COMML LOT
L.A 1 548sqm
National Hi-way Banca-banca Victoria
Minimum Bid Price P 3,250,000 00

UCPB - COMML LOT
L.A 27 853sqm
Maharlika Hi-way Brgy San Benito
Minimum Bid Price P 36 308,949 95

UCPB - COMML BLDG
L.A 335sqm
National R Adelina Agri-vill, Bo. Of Banca-banca
Minimum Bid Price P 5,960 000 00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A 2 000 sqm
Within Brgy Bocal Calamba City
Minimum Bid Price P 4 600,000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A 271sqm
Along Rd Lot 7 & 9 Richwood Park Village
Minimum Bid Price P 439,020 00

UCPB - RESORT BLDG
L.A 300sqm
Mana Makiling Villa, Pansol Calamba
Minimum Bid Price P 4,000,000 00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A 121sqm
Magnolia St Villa Adelina III, Bulilan
Minimum Bid Price P 495,000 00

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PCA, CIIF agree to develop denuded areas in Agusan Valley

THE PHILIPPINE Coconut Authority (PCA) and the Coconut Industry Investment Fund (CIIF) have agreed to develop more than 110,000 hectares of land in Agusan Valley.

In an agreement signed recently, the PCA and the CIIF committed to explore the possibility of developing denuded, logged-over areas in Agusan Valley into plantations of hybrid coconut, tree crops, and other agro forest products and forest plants.

Presidential Decree No. 1768 authorizes the PCA to enter into an agreement with CIIF, through an agro-forest lease, to develop the areas.

The agreement is in line with efforts to pursue President Macapagal-Arroyo's 10-point economic and social program, that includes the development of two million hectares of agricultural land, decongestion of urban centers, reduction of poverty and generation of employment.

Besides its economic benefits, the project will also contribute to the ecological renewal of the areas covered and to the welfare of its surrounding communities.

Under the Memorandum of Agreement signed by the PCA and the CIIF, a task force will be formed to come up with a feasibility study on the project by January next year.

6 foreign . . .

From page B1

passive, Bañares said.

Hopewell Crown, which is 10-percent owned by Hopewell Holdings Ltd. of Gordon Wu, signed a $480-million deal with the Estrada administration to carry out two phases of the rehabilitation and expansion of the Slex.

The first phase costs about P10 billion, according to Bañares. This covers the rehabilitation of the Alabang viaduct, the widening of Alabang to Calamba and the link-up of Slex in Calamba to the Star highway in Sto. Tomas, Batangas.

Once construction starts next year, he said the first phase should be completed in three to four years. The group has to secure the right of way for the 8-kilometer link-up of Slex and Star.

The second phase is the extension of Slex from Calamba all the way to Lucena City.

Bañares said 30 percent of the project cost would be financed with equity and the remaining 70 percent by debt.

He said Northeast Development was prepared to spend P1 billion in equity to start the project next year while the tollway company was completing its financial package, which would usually take a year.

Hopewell Crown is also talking with several multilateral groups to help finance the project, Bañares added.

He said South Luzon Tollway would also have to increase the fees upon the completion of the project so it could recover the cost of investments and to generate some return.

Vehicle . . .

From page B1

In a report, the groups said that while January to September sales went down 7.6 percent, there was a "negligible" increase in overall sales of 2 percent for September compared to the previous month.

Sales of passenger car in the first nine months went up 62 percent to 24,233 units from 54,943 units in the year-ago period.

There were 40,290 units of commercial vehicles—Asian utility vehicles, light commercial vehicles, light trucks, and trucks and buses—down 27 percent from 54,943 units.

"Increasing costs of fuel and the pending proposals of government to further increase tariffs on vehicles [with engine displaces larger than 2 liters] would likely contribute to continued sluggish sales," the report said.

"The postponement of significant institutional expansions also translated to slow turnover of vehicle sales," it added. "The fiscal crisis, coupled with increase in cost of doing business particularly in prices of electricity, and to some extent, gas prices, all contributed to sluggish sales."

In the first three quarters, sales of AUVs and of light trucks both slid by 50 percent and 51 percent, respectively. Sales of LCVs grew 18 percent and of trucks and buses by 2 percent.

People, Events & Products

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Editor Aries Espinosa

Papal Nuncio stresses media's role in value formation

THE PAPAL Nuncio Archbishop Antonio Franco has underscored the vital role media play in molding people's values that contribute to the building of a better society and the advancement of humanity's authentic welfare.

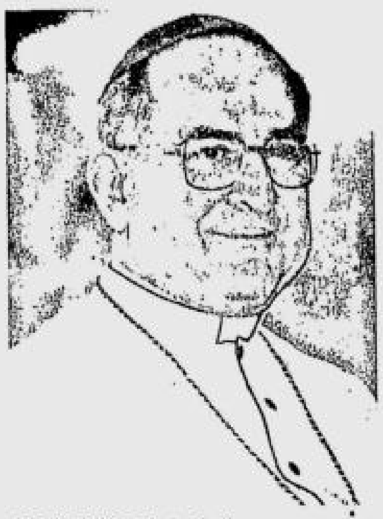
"Mass media are means of social communication. So, by their very nature, media always entail the communication of something," he said, adding: "Thus, one who works for mass media must not only be a master of his art and technology, but he must also be a man with a heart and conscience, with a profound human empathy and a consciousness of his lofty responsibility."

The Papal Nuncio stressed this in his message for the forthcoming Catholic Mass Media Awards (CMMA) set for Oct. 12 at the Irwin Theater, Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, Quezon City. This year's theme is "The Media and the Family: A Risk and a Richness."

The Papal envoy also emphasized the importance of the family, noting that it is "the very life and future of every nation and of the Church. This is the reason the gospel of the family is the good news of the third millennium."

In his message to the board of trustees headed by Ambassador Antonio L. Cabangon Chua as chair, the Papal Nuncio commended the CMMA, now celebrating its 26th year, for offering incentives and encouragement to media producers and products that promote Christian values essential for building up a more human world and one that corresponds to man's total vocation and thus make a precious contribution to the mission of the Church in the evangelization of the present times.

He said the annual activity is one thing the media can look up to as he expressed fears that the media have the capacity to seriously damage families when they present an inadequate or even distorted outlook on the family, on life, on religion and on morality.


ARCHBISHOP Antonio Franco

Orange Tours and Travel participates in F and B expo

ORANGE Tours and Travel joined the 6th International Food and Beverage Exposition held June 30 to July 3. Its participation aimed to promote its upcoming event "Orange Caravan 2005, Your Journey Has Just Begun", an ultimate experience where participants can reach their dream destinations.

Orange Tours and Travel is one of the travel agencies that create affordable tour packages, encourage participation of local, foreign and private sectors and events management as a way of promoting and developing the culture of tourism in local travel destinations. This increases the number of domestic and foreign travelers visiting the Philippines' natural wonders, theme parks, and other points of interest in major cities and locales.

The caravan would tap tourist destinations most local and foreign tourists would place on top of their itineraries. Participants would enjoy two weeks of fun, excitement, comfort, pleasure, and a night of party as Orange Tours brings an ultimate experience in dream destinations. For more information, call 924-1957, 434-3879, 0916-3246780 or e-mail orangetrvl@hotmail.com, or log on to www.orangetours-caravan2005.com.

ORANGE
TOURS & TRAVEL
AT THE recently concluded 6th International Food and Beverage Exposition at the World Trade Center were (from left) Roy Martin, director of sales and marketing of Microtel Inn, Josie Dingcong, general manager of Orange Tours and Travel and Mayose Gozun-Bautista, project director of Ifbe.

PLDT, CEU SIGN MOA

PLDT recently signed a memorandum of agreement with Centro Escolar University (CEU) for the provision of PLDT BizDSL Power Packed 2MB with additional 100MB e-mail hosting and webhosting, through PLDT Business Solutions. Seated, from left, are Victor Y. Tria, PLDT senior manager for IP solutions category, Precy P. Katigbak, PLDT head for access business, Cesar Enriquez, PLDT FVP for corporate credit administration and support, Dr. Rosita Navarro, CEU president, Conrado Iñigo Jr, CEU AVP for technology and development, and Patricia Echauz, CEU VP for financial affairs in behalf of Carmelita La O', SVP of business affairs. Standing, from left, are Carlo Aguas, PLDT relationship manager, Edmund Pike, PLDT product manager, Rommel Jotic, CEU head, computer science department, Teresita Mijares, CEU head, ICT department, June de Jesus, CEU coordinator, programming section, Julius Cortez, CEU network division chair, and Gary Arguelles, CEU systems analysis division chair.

BEST OF EUROPE

Recently returning from a 19-day, 8-nation pilgrimage tour of Europe are the 28 men and women (shown above), who prayed through the Stations of the Cross in Lourdes-one of the highlights of the trip that started July 22 and extended to Singapore. Adam's Express Travel has arranged another Oct. 12 departure, led by Adam's president Mamerth Banatin with Fr. Pono as pilgrimage chaplain. The July 22 participants were, front row from left, Elsa and Giselle Go, Delecia Bate, Norma Samson and Fe Rivera. Second row: Fr. Carlito Pono, Grace Abarico, Virginia Crucillo, Estrella Cagampang, Hercules Sapurlada, Consolacion Roy, Rosita Tan, Flor Enriquez, Quintina Calagos, Editha Tan, Beatriz Sepra, Elenita Tiong, Josie Darang, Celestino Balcon, Urzulina Pono and Gliceria Balcon. Not with the group are Banatin, Elmer Ang bun, Maria David, Dr. Ellen Arañas, Peewee Diaz and Mr and Ms Quintin Sapuriada

CBN Grupo &
Banco de Oro
introduce
the fa way
taCASH

BDO, CBN GRUPO SEAL AGREEMENT

Banco de Oro Universal Bank (BDO) formalized an agreement with CBN Grupo to promote, through the latter's ports in Europe and Asia, the newest and most innovative remittance product, the BDO Remit Cash Card-the 'InstaLoad InstaCash' card. It is a domestic card specifically designed for beneficiaries receiving regular remittances from abroad. Because of its online feature, remittance from OFWs can be credited to the BDO Remit Cash Card in just a matter of minutes. In addition to the cash card promotion, CBN Grupo will also promote the 'BDO Remittance Pick-Up Anywhere' at branches of BDO. OFWs can send remittances in peso, US dollar or even in the form of SM Gift Cheques, their beneficiaries can choose from which of the 180 BDO branches nationwide they can claim the remittance. Shown are Nestor V. Tan (3rd from left) and Nelia Locsin (4th from left), presidents of BDO and CBN Grupo, respectively, shaking hands after the contract signing. The event was witnessed by (from left) lawyer Salvacion Manalo, legal consultant of CBN Grupo, Ismael Estela, SVP and head of transaction banking group, and William Ng, CBN director.

MICROSOFT PCS FOR TEACHERS PROGRAM LAUNCHED

Microsoft Philippines, Intel Microelectronics Philippines and Asia United Bank recently launched PCs for Public School Teachers, an initiative that allows public school teachers to have their very own PC at a subsidized rate and on a friendly installment program. Application forms for this program has been available starting Oct. 7. The PCs for Public School Teachers program is endorsed by the Department of Education. Shown during the signing of the agreement were, from left, Antonio 'TJ' Javier, managing director of Microsoft Philippines, Vic Lim, executive first vice president of Asia United Bank, Ricky Banaag, country manager, Intel Microelectronics Philippines, and DepEd Undersecretary Juan Miguel Luz.

Permanent Plans employs telemarketing to prop up services

PERMANENT Plans Inc (PPI), one of the leading names in the pre-need industry, has added another innovation in its marketing and sales strategy with the launch of its telemarketing services department November 2003. The 14-year-old company is only the fourth in the pre-need and insurance industry to employ this kind of marketing approach.

"We think it's about time to innovate since the company is always on the lookout for improvements that will eventually benefit our customers and future clients," said Joseph Ronquillo, Permanent Plans senior manager for teleservices. "We see the telemarketing services department as another way of doing business-a more aggressive way of selling pre-need," he added.

The telemarketing services department complements the tried and tested "traditional" method of selling pre-need via agents. Through this method, Permanent Plans is introduced to people who have no prior knowledge of the company and its services.

"A phone call doesn't take more than five minutes-the telemarketers simply invite their prospects to drop by the Permanent Plans main office located in Ayala, Makati where an agent will answer their concerns about pre-need and the company," Ronquillo further explained. "A free accident insurance good for a year is given as premium to clients who will drop by the Permanent Plans office."

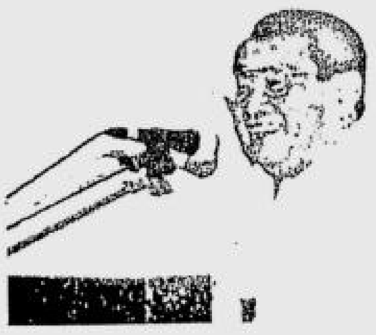
Besides Ronquillo, a support and training team consisting of three area managers were also brought onboard to set up the teleservices project. The team already had 10 years of experience in pre-need telemarketing, having been part of the team that first formulated and tested the method on past pre-need and insurance companies in the early 1990s. Currently, the department employs 30 full-time agents.

"The numbers are quite promising even only after five months of operation," said Ronquillo. "Telemarketing services already processes 10,500 names a week where most of their new clients are culled from. A telemarketer alone makes 15 bookings per day, where an average of two prospects is successfully turned into new clients."

However, Ronquillo said the success of telemarketing services would also depend on the continuous training of its telemarketers and agents. To do this, the team holds a weekly company briefing and training to enhance agent-customer interaction skills. Moreover, since Permanent Plans puts value in trust and *alagang panghabang buhay*, agents are trained to put more importance in winning the trust of his client than making a sale.

Ronquillo also believes that telemarketing services will not outdate traditional agents. "Agents will always be a vital part of pre-need-they are the ones that give face to the company."

The team is looking at expanding soon by employing more people to double their output as the year progresses. There are also plans of adding more telephone lines to expand call traffic.



GOZON SPEAKS ON LEADERSHIP

GMA Network Inc chair/president and CEO Felipe L. Gozon speaks before the managers of Unilever Philippines during the company's leadership forum dubbed the 'Leading Edge' held at the Unilever headquarters in Manila recently. Gozon shared his insights regarding the network's leadership challenges and how he faced these problems when he assumed the GMA Network presidency in 2000. He said that 'in this fast changing world of business, particularly in TV broadcasting, it is being responsive to change that will keep GMA's leading edge now and in the future.'

Intramuros painting tilt

INSTITUTO Cervantes once again presents "Fiesta! Spanish Festival for Culture and the Arts" in commemoration of its National Day celebrated every Oct. 12. One of the events during the month-long festival is the "Concurso de Pintura Rápida", an on-the-spot painting competition where all artists and art enthusiasts, young and old, amateurs and professionals alike are invited to participate. The contest's theme is "Rincones de Intramuros (Corners of Intramuros)", which means that painters or painters-in-the-making may choose any nook and cranny of Intramuros as their subject. The competition is open to all residents of the Philippines 17 years old and above. Registration will be at the Puerta Real Gardens from 7 a.m to 9:30 a.m. Submission of finished paintings will be from 2 to 3 p.m., after which the paintings will be exhibited and sold from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. For more information, call the Instituto Cervantes at 526-1482 to 85

ANF nat'l assembly

THE ADORACION Nocturna Filipina, an association of lay persons devoted to the adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, celebrated its 84th year on Oct. 10. In celebration of this milestone, a National Eucharistic Assembly will convene at the Pope Pius Center at UN Avenue, Manila on Oct. 16 and 17. Tagged as the 15th National Assembly, it will witness the convergence of delegates from all over the country with the common goal of strengthening the ANF Constitution and By-laws, in order that all may better know, love and revere the Lord Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. Founded in 1920 in the old Jesuit Church of San Ignacio in Intramuros, Manila, ANF is a national organization with units called *turnos* established in every diocese in the country. Its members manifest dedication to our Lord Jesus Christ in the Eucharist through night adoration.

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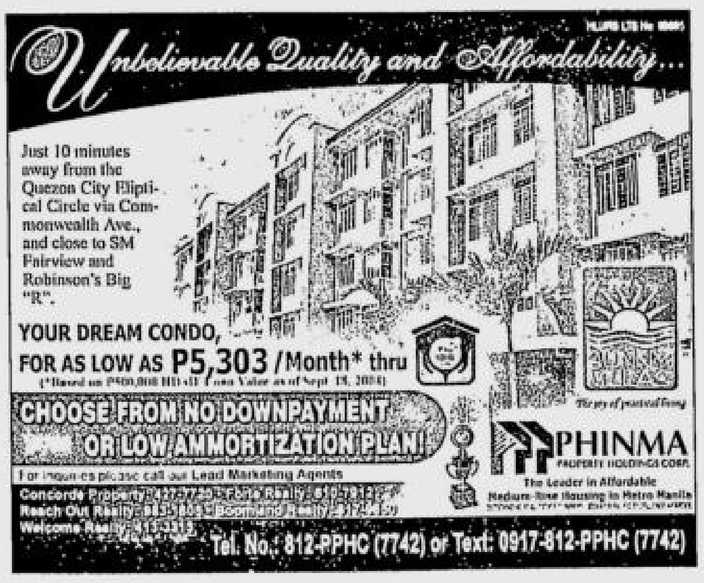

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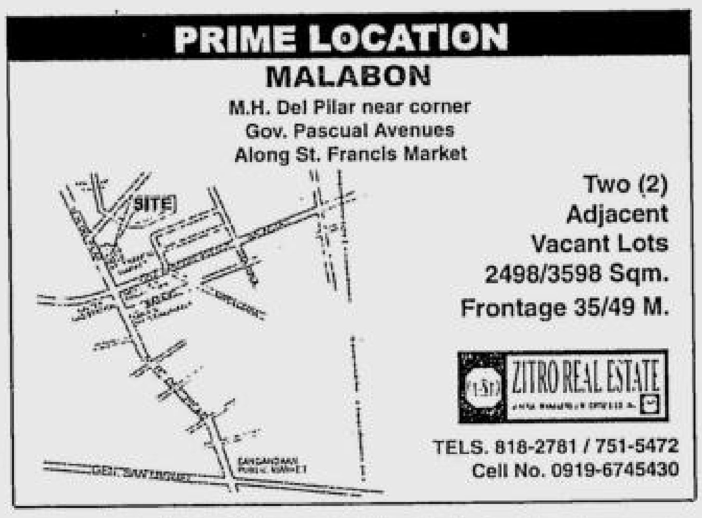

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FRANCISCO NICOLAS DUQUE

Peacefully joined our Lord on October 9, 2004
at the age of 82.

His loving wife **Socorro Duque** (†); children **Oscar & Tita, Lucy & Celo, Angeles & Mary, Teresa, Nancy & Jesem, Mercedes, Mary Anne, Paulo**; grandchildren, nephews & nieces request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at #7 I, Fernando St., Malanday, Valenzuela City.

Interment will be on Tuesday, Oct. 12, 2004 at the Valenzuela Memorial Park at 3 p.m.

SABAS M. ISAGUIRRE, SR.

Peacefully joined our Lord
on October 9, 2004 at the age of 79.

He will be missed by his wife, **Cresencia Macasieb**; children **Bobsie & Norma, Mike & Corina, Emma & Vitts, Bobby & Malu, Berdie & Jane** and **Cresh & Mat**; grandchildren **Katch, Quella, Ira, Christian, Tinni, Carlo, Lorenz, Karren, Althea, Victor, Nicole, Jonel, Ayeeh, Ma. Cresh, Charize & Mat Jr.**; brother **Cornelio**; nieces, nephews, relatives and friends.

His remains lie in state at Capilla San Aemiliani of Arlington East, The Garden Chapels, 1354 C. Raymundo Ave. corner Mercedes Ave., Pasig City.

Interment will be at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina, date and time will be announced later.

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Montejo's Newspaper Supply
246 Avenida Veteranos
Tacloban City
Tel. Nos. (053) 325-6743/321-2954
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Dolores "Nena" Turingan Mallonga

of Tuguegarao City and Project 8, Q.C.

(March 29, 1917 – October 6, 2004)

Peacefully joined her Creator
at the age of 87.

Her bereaved brothers, sisters and in-laws: **Albert** (†) and **Cons, Titoy** and **Ching, Phine** and **Aladin, Isabelo** (†), **Justo** (†) and **Doning, Betty** and **Angel, Lily**; nephews and nieces request readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at La Funeraria Paz, C-11 South wing building, Q.C.

Interment will be on Tuesday, October 12, 2004 at the Heavens Gate I, Cogeo, Antipolo City after the 10:00 a.m. Mass at Chapel 11.

COL. DANIEL SAYGO MACATLANG, SR.
PC (RET.)

Peacefully joined his Creator
on October 6, 2004 at the age of 75.

His children **Lina, Noli, Danie, Jr., Rommel** and their families request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie at the Chapel in 99 Lalakay, Los Baños, Laguna.

Interment will be on October 14, 2004, 10:00 a.m. Calamba Cemetery.

> **"...absent from the body to be present with the Lord."** 2 Corinthians 5:8

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DBP Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Development Bank of the Philippines is inviting interested suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following items:

Description	Quantity	Approved Budget
AUTOMATED TELLER MACHINES (ATM)	18 units	P 25,200,000.00
UNINTERRUPTED POWER SUPPLY, 1.5 KVA	37 units	2,960,000.00
MICR CHECK READER WITH COMPUTER/PRINTER (HARDWARE/SOFTWARE)	14 units	6,510,000.00
MICR CHECK ENCODER	11 units	1,595,000.00
PORTABLE MONEY COUNTER	4 units	320,000.00

Expected Delivery Date: March 22, 2005 — AUTOMATED TELLER MACHINE
Expected Delivery Date: February 15, 2005 — OTHER OFFICE EQUIPMENT

Schedule of Activities:

Pre-Bidding Conference:

October 27, 2004 (Wednesday) at 9:00 a.m. 6/F, OPS Conference Room, DBP Main Building, Makati Ave., Makati City.

Submission and Opening of Eligibility Documents, Technical and Financial Proposals "On or before" November 10, 2004 (Wednesday) at 9:00 a.m. 6/F, OPS, DBP Head Office.

Application for eligibility check is open to suppliers registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission/Department of Trade and Industry and has been engaged in the **Supply, Delivery and Installation of the above office equipment** for at least three (3) years, must be at least 60% Filipino-owned (for partnership and corporations). Interested suppliers may secure the Eligibility Requirement Form from the Procurement Services Division, 6th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City or you may download these forms at www.devbankphil.com.ph and at the Electronic Procurement Service of the Department of Budget and Management.

The Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act No. 9184 series of 2003 will be used in the conduct of this Bidding.

The Bank reserves the right to reject documents that do not comply with the requirements.

For further inquiries, please call Mr. Manuel A. Tagalo at telephone numbers 812-6375/815-1613.

Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – Oct. 11 & 18, 2004)

PRIVATIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OFFICE

Invitation to Bid

The assets, consisting of two (2) parcels of land are being offered for Public Bidding in two (2) separate lots, on an "as-is, where-is" basis. Said assets formerly belong to Prime White Cement Corporation (PWCC) located at **Brgy. Sta. Lucia, San Fernando, Pampanga.**

Lot No.	Particulars	Indicative Price
1	Land (330 sq.m., TCT No. 574187)	P 165,000
2	Land (350 sq.m., TCT No. 574188)	P 175,000

Bids will be received, opened and tabulated in the presence of bidders on October 29, 2004 at 3:00 p.m. at the PMO Conference Room, 6th Floor, PMO Bldg., 104 Gamboa St., Legaspi Village, Makati City. Interested parties may request for a duly authenticated copy of the Asset Specific Bidding Rules (ASBR), Asset Specific Bidding Form (ASBF) together with the Asset Specific Catalogue for a nominal fee of P500.00.

For more information, please call Ms. Melinda B. Cortez of the PMO Marketing Department at telephone numbers 892-2145 or 818-4733.

HARRY POUND COMPANY CONDUCTS WORKSHOP

The Harry Pound Company recently conducted an intensive two-day workshop on Tactical Sales Negotiation aimed at providing advanced skills in planning, conducting, and evaluating negotiations with corporate buyers. Shown are, seated in the middle from left, Joe Mar Matienzo, president, Noreen Latagan, VP – marketing and sales and Norman Goss, master trainer, partner consultant of The Harry Pound Company and the participants from various business organizations including Asia Brewery, Zuellig Pharma Corporation, Purefoods, Abacus, Infomax Systems, BHA Group Phils. and STI. The workshop was held in the Broadway Room of the Astoria Plaza in Pasig City. A new batch is scheduled on October 8-9, with few seats left. To register, please call 404-2753.

UP IBALON 30TH ANNIVERSARY

The board of directors of the UP Ibalon, the oldest organization of Bicolano students from the University of the Philippines, is celebrating its milestone year with an alumni homecoming affair on Dec. 4, and a host of socially relevant projects like scholarship grants and educational programs to poor and deserving Bicolano students and depressed Bicol communities. Discussing plans during one of the board's regular meetings are, from left, Cherrie Belmonte, Peter de la Cruz, Arnel Astillero, Zards Colambo (president), Robert Uy, Teddy Rigoroso, Wilma Silva-Netto Roxas and TG Serrano. All alumni are enjoined to call Arnel Astillero, 0916-6833460 or TG Serrano 0917-2076745.

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Tel. 729-8888	Rm. 1602 Cecil
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Please bring photocopies of your documents RESUME W/ PICTURE, TRANSCRIPT, EMP. CERTS., PRC ID, EXAM RESULTS, PASSPORT, 4 pcs. passport size pictures.

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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Finance
BUREAU OF CUSTOMS
Manila

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bureau of Customs through the Bid and Awards Committee invites local bidders to apply for eligibility who are:

a. Duly licensed Filipino citizens/sole proprietorship; or

b. Partnerships duly organized under the laws of the Philippines of which at least seventy five percent (75%) of the interest belongs to citizens of the Philippines; or

c. Corporations duly organized under the laws of the Philippines, and of which at least seventy five percent (75%) of the outstanding capital stock belongs to citizens of the Philippines; or

d. Cooperatives duly registered with the Cooperatives Development Authority (CDA); and

e. For Lot Nos. 1-6, bidders should have a DTI Accreditation Certificate of a minimum "5 Star Data Processing Equipment Rating" for the current year.

Lot No.	Quantity	Item Package	Approved Budget (in pesos)
1	400	Branded New Desktop Computers (Workstation)	26,000,000.00
2	100	Branded New Desktop Computers (High End)	7,500,000.00
3	10	Branded New Mobile Computers (10.6" LCD)	1,400.000.00
4	10	Branded New Mobile Computers (12.1" LCD)	1,400,000.00
5	2	Branded New Computer Servers (Back-up)	5,000,000.00
6	6	Branded New Computer Servers (Email)	4,800,000.00
7	8 10	Cisco Routers 10/100 Switch	1,026,000.00 300,000.00
8	3 500 4 4	UPS – 10KVA UPS 500VA APC Symetra Power Module APC Symetra Battery Pack	900,000.00 3,000,000.00 500.000.00 100,000.00
9	75 31 23 4	Dot Matrix Printer Desk Jet Printer Laser Jet Printer Laser Jet Colored	1,125,000.00 403,000.00 1,046,500.00 300,000.00
10	2 3 1	3HP Window Type Aircon 3HP Split Type Aircon 3Tonner Split Type	80,000.00 180,000.00 100,000.00
11	1 3	165 KVA Generator 75KVA Generator	1,500.000.00 2,400,000.00
12	3	Projector	225,000.00
		TOTAL	61,135,500.00

Approved budget for the contract: PhP61, 135,500.00 sourced from the BOC approved budget for 2003.

The prospective bidder may submit its Letter of Intent and buy Bid document during office hours on October 25-27, 2004 upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P5,000.00 at BAC Secretariat, General Services Division, Bureau of Customs, Port Area, Manila.

The eligibility screening of bidders, evaluation of bids and awarding of contract shall be governed by RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.

The pre-bid conference for Lot Nos. 10-12 shall be held on November 4, 2004, 9:30am-11:00am at Multi-Purpose Room, 3rd Floor, CRIC Bldg., Bureau of Customs, Port Area, Manila. The pre-bid conference for lot Nos. 1-9 shall be held at the same date and place at 1:30pm.

All envelopes (Eligibility Requirements, Technical and Financial Bids) shall be submitted to the BAC Secretariat on November 22, 2004 at 9:00am at the Multi-Purpose Room, 3rd Floor, CRIC Bldg., Bureau of Customs, Port Area, Manila. Opening of the bids shall be on the same day and place at 10:00am. LATE BIDS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

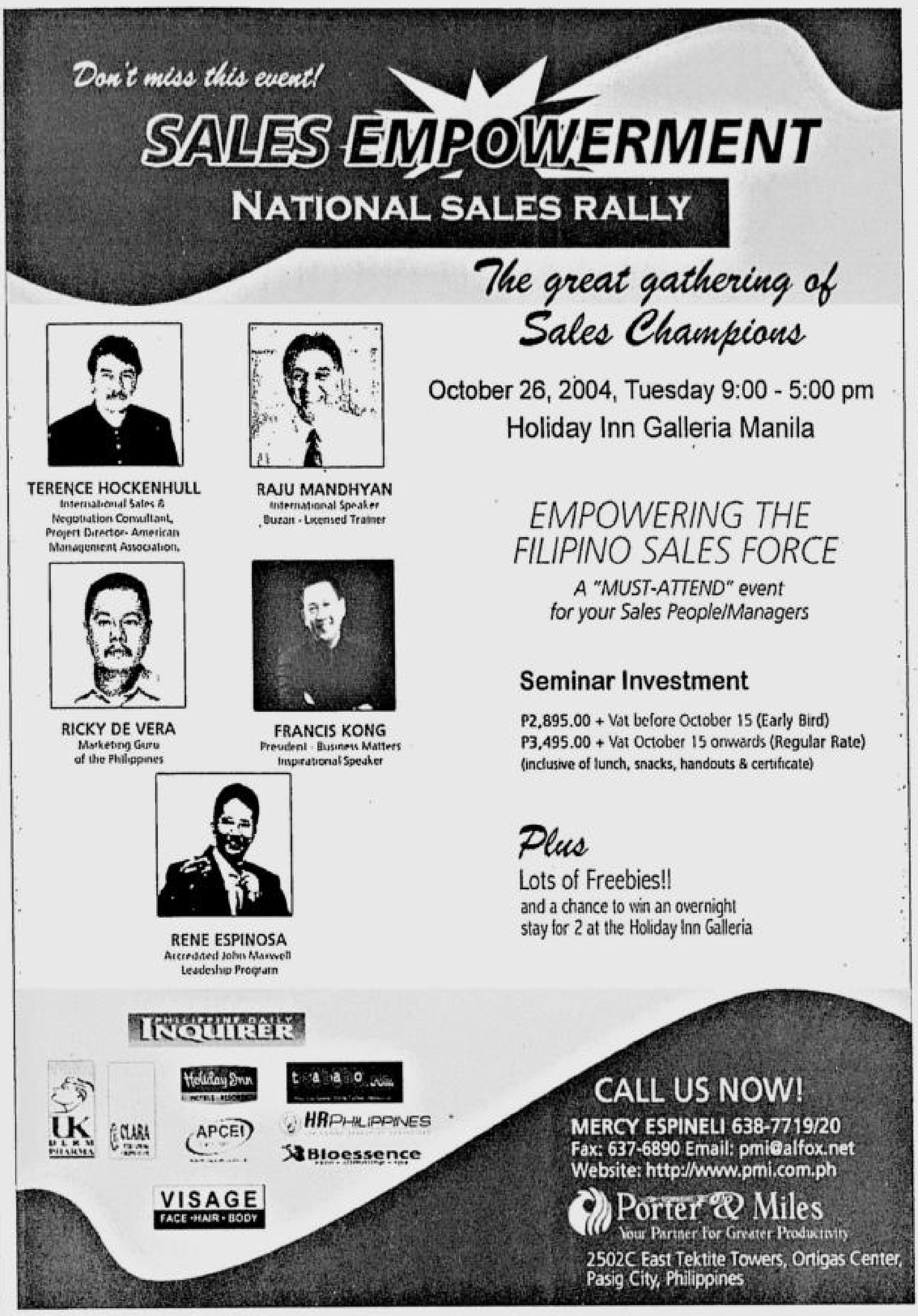
BOC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or any part thereof, to waive any informality or minor defect, and to accept the offer most advantageous to the Government.

BOC shall in no case be held responsible or liable for any and all costs associated with the bidder's participation in the bidding process regardless of its results.

Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the undersigned.

(Sgd.) Atty. **ROBERTO D. GEOTINA**
Deputy Commissioner, IAG
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – October 11 & 18, 2004)



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DPS Grand Alumni Homecoming

CALLING all graduates of the Diliman Preparatory School from Batch '69 to 2004, our dear Alma Mater is commemorating its 35th Foundation Anniversary and we're having a special get together on Nov. 27, Saturday, 5 p.m. at the DPS Gym. Aside from reminiscing with batchmates, schoolmates, teachers and friends, the event will also serve as the launching of the DPS Alumni Association. Help us build the DPS Alumni Directory. If you are in touch with your batchmates and other DPS graduates or know where to contact them, please share this information with us via e-mail dps_alumni@yahoo.com. For more information, please contact Menchie Pascual 951-9403, Sheryl Tupas 951-0382 or Aisa Fernandez 952-0571.

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Trans Co

NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION

South Luzon, Operations & Maintenance
San Vicente, Biñan, Laguna

October 1, 2004

INVITATION FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The National Transmission Corporation, South Luzon Operation & Maintenance invites interested Security Agencies to apply for eligibility and to bid for the proposed undertaking

Project No.	Contract Code/Title	Location	Duration	Approved Budget for the Contract	Source of Budget	Qualifications
1	Trans 04 SSSLT 17 Supply of Security Services for Offices, Facilities & Assets of South Luzon Operations & Maintenance	From Batangas, Laguna, Quezon to Bicol (Covering Areas of South Luzon)	Two (2) Years	Package I Php 24,777,841.24 Package II Php22,434,314.98 Package III Php16,875,403.00	Internal Cash Generation (ICG)	- With License to Operate from PNP SAGSD - Actively registered with SEC or DTI - With 200 guards Presently posted - Operating for the last 5 years

Prospective bidders must have at least completed a single contract similar to the contract to be bid where the major component of works involves supply of security services.

Applications for Eligibility and to Bid (legal, technical and financial documents and statements) shall be evaluated using "PASS FAIL" criteria and only Prospective Bidders that meets above qualification requirements shall be invited by NTC in the bidding. All bids equal to or lower than the Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid shall be evaluated based on the responsiveness of the contractor's offer to the contract under bidding, and shall be subject to Postqualification therefore an award is made. Bid Prices submitted higher than the Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid shall be rejected and returned outright.

Application for Eligibility and Bid Forms will be available for issuance starting October 5, 2004 up to November 3, 2004 at the: Regional Contracts Management Office, Administration Division, NTC, South Luzon Operation and Maintenance, San Vicente, Binan, Laguna. Telefax No.: 520-8213 and E-mail Address, (rdramas@transco.ph) upon presentation of the following documents and payment of a non-refundable fee of P1,000.00 per copy:

1. Letter of Intent
2. Original copy of Certificate of Registration from the Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC) and/or from the Department of Trade & Industry (DTI)
3. Original copy of valid License to Operate a Security Agency Issued by the PNP-SAGSD.
4. Certification from PNP-SAGSD that the number of guards posted is not less than two hundred (200).

Failure to satisfy the above subject requirements shall mean forfeiture of the right of the prospective applicant bidder to purchase the Eligibility & Bid documents.

Schedule of Pre-Bid Conference will be on October 21, 2004, 9:00 A.M., at the PTG Conference Room. Deadline for submission of duly accomplished Application for Eligibility and to Bid, documents and statements shall be on or before 9:00 A.M. of November 4, 2004 which shall be submitted at the office address mentioned above. Eligibility Screening and Bid Opening shall be held on the same date and time, November 4, 2004, 9:00 A.M., at the PTG Conference Room. If the date is a non-working day or declared non-working day, the deadline for submission shall be moved to the next working day immediately following said date. Late submission and/or incomplete application shall not be accepted.

Prospective bidders shall signify conformance to bidding terms and conditions as required and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution. The procurement rules and regulations used in this transactions shall be in accordance with the implementing rules and regulations of "R.A. 9184).

NTC reserves the right to reject any Application for Eligibility or all bids without offering any reasons, waive any required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.

Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communication should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) G.R. LISTANO
Dept. Manager PSMD-North and
Chairman Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI–Oct. 10 & 11, 2004)

NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION
THERMAL GENERATION
BATANGAS COAL-FIRED THERMAL POWER PLANT

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Bid Ref. No. PB-JS-BCFTPP-Proc04-01

The Local Bids and Awards Committee (Local BAC) and HR/Admin. Procurement, NPC-BCFTPP with office address at NPC, BCFTPP Complex, Brgy. San Rafael, Calaca, Batangas invite interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following requirements:

DATE OF BIDDING: October 28, 2004 (10:00 AM)

P.R. NO.	ITEM/DESCRIPTION	CONTRACT DURATION	APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT TO BE BID
2BCF04-459	SUPPLY OF LABOR, TOOLS/ EQUIPMENT, MATERIALS, SUPPLIES AND SUPERVISION OF JOBS RELATED TO JANITORIAL AND SANITATION AND OTHER RELATED UTILITY SERVICES OPERATIONS	Two (2) years	P23,700,000.00

Complete sets of Eligibility and Bid Documents may be obtained from the Materials Management Services Office, NPC-BCFTPP Complex, Brgy. San Rafael, Calaca, Batangas upon submission and presentation of the original DTI or SEC registration and payment of non-refundable fee of P5,000.00 from Monday-Friday at 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

Bids will be received at the NPC-BCFTPP, Calaca Science Centrum, on the date and time specified above after which Eligibility Requirements and Bid Proposals will be opened in the presence of attending bidders. Certificate of Registration issued by PSD/MMSD will be honored provided that Certification is still valid.

A Pre-Bid Conference will be conducted at the NPC-BCFTPP, Calaca Science Centrum on October 15, 2004 at 10:00 AM followed by a Site Inspection of the project.

Prospective bidders shall signify conformance to bidding terms and conditions as required and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution in accordance with the IRR of Republic Act No. 9184.

The Local BAC, NPC-BCFTPP, reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to cancel the bidding process and reject all bids, at any time prior to award of contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder(s) or any obligation to inform the affected bidder(s) of the ground(s) for NPC's action.

Batangas Coal-Fired Thermal Power Plant's other requirements are posted at the DBM Website: **www.procurementservice.org.**

(Sgd.) **DENEL C. MATEO**
Chairman, Local BAC
NPC-BCFTPP

(PDI – Oct. 4 & 11, 2004)

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) invites interested contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the project:

MINDANAO II GEOTHERMAL PRODUCTION FIELD CONTROL SYSTEM REFURBISHMENT
EDC04-040

The Approved Budget is P2,443,870.00 chargeable against PNOC-EDC fund. The contract duration is 120 calendar days.

Application Forms for Eligibility and Bid Documents may be secured from the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group (c/o M.C. Barile) starting **October 11, 2004** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Pesos: Five Hundred (P500.00).

For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on **October 20, 2004, 2:00 p.m.** at the CAC Conference Room, First Floor, Building 5, Energy Center, Fort Bonifacio.

Applications for Eligibility and sealed bids shall be received by the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group at PNOC-EDC, 1st floor, Bldg 5, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila, not later than **2:00 p.m. (Contracts Administration Group Office Wall Clock Time) of November 04, 2004** and shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter.

PNOC-EDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to abort the bidding process, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder whose bid is considered most advantageous to PNOC-EDC.

BAC CHAIRMAN

(PDI-Oct 11 2004)

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makro

PILIPINAS MAKRO, INC.

INVITATION TO LEASE

Attention: Restaurant & Coffee Shop Operators

Pilipinas Makro Inc. is inviting restaurant and coffee shop operators to look into expansion opportunities in its upcoming 12th store located at the corner of EDSA and Main Avenue, CUBAO, Quezon City, and at its SUCAT outlet. Area for lease is from 60-100 square meters.

Interested parties are requested to please send their letters of intent along with their company profile and store concept to the Business Development Department, Pilipinas Makro Inc., Km. 21 East Service Road, South Superhighway, Sucat, Muntinlupa City. Or fax to 842-5856 / 842-0648.

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Mt. Province town gets glimpse of world with Internet

By Erwin Oliva
Contributor

POBLACION, BONTOC—A few meters from the Mountain Province General Comprehensive High School (MPGCHS), students were huddled in a little computer shop as they watched one of their classmates play the "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" computer game.

Outside the little shop, a sign was noticeable: "We discourage students from playing during school hours."

That made me smile as I recalled my younger days when my classmates and I would cut class to play video games at a nearby shop. I looked at my watch and realized it was lunch break.

Arriving at the national high school, the sight of students playing an improvised baseball game greeted us. Apparently, traditional play has not been completely forgotten in this remote farming town that can only be reached by a 10-hour drive through Nueva Vizcaya through the dirt roads of the Cordillera mountains from Manila or through the scary seven-hour bus ride via the Halsema highway from Baguio City.

However, since computers and eventually the Internet were introduced to this remote town that is the capital of Mt. Province, kids are now gravitating toward little computer shops to the chagrin of parents.

"Parents are a bit concerned about letting their kids use computers or the Internet," said Lucia Dominguez, physics teacher at the MPGCHS.

Some parents were complaining that their children were spending too much time and money in several Internet cafés that opened a few years ago. There are three Internet cafés in Poblacion. Some are open until 9 p.m. However, due to pressure from parents, this town of 20,000 people has imposed a 9 p.m. curfew.

A beneficiary of Intel's Teach to the Future program for public school teachers, Dominguez understands how Bontoc kids have become hooked on PCs and the Internet.

"Having access to the Internet has encouraged them to explore and do research," she said.

Acceptance of technology in this former farming community apparently takes time.

"Of course, it has some negative effects. Some parents were complaining that their children were staying out late. I think some kids are going to the Internet café to chat and play games but they tell their parents they are doing research," said Vernice Cuteng, English teacher at the MPGCHS.

Cuteng, however, believes that computers and the Internet have made the younger generation more aware of the world outside Bontoc. In fact, more and more high school graduates are considering taking IT courses in college, she added.

A computer school has also emerged in Bontoc. Established by a local resident in 1992, Xijen Institute of Technology now has at least 150 students studying programming, computer troubleshooting and basic computer literacy.

As for herself, Cuteng said the Internet has made teaching more interesting.

"Personally, it has made me more aware of my surroundings, and it is now easier to communicate with other teachers from other places outside Bontoc," she added.

Cuteng admitted, however, that a lot of teachers still fear the Internet and computers.

Fourth-year student Christine Ringor is editor of the MPGCHS school paper. Since the school went online in 2003, she now spends two hours a day surfing the Web.

"The Internet has made my life easier. Researching is easier," Ringor said. She is part of the science class, meaning she belongs to the creme dela creme of her school.

Ringor uses computers to lay out the school paper. She has her own personal computer at home.

"At least 10 of my classmates have their own PCs at home," she added.

When Evelyn Joyce Taguiba took over as principal of the Mountain Province school in 1999, she envisioned introducing Bontoc students to computers. In 2000, Microsoft gave the school seven computers and one server. They were initially hooked up to Digitel but a forest fire disrupted the telephone connection to the school. Last year, Microsoft connected the school to the Internet via satellite using the Dream network. MPGCHS eventually became the first high school in Bontoc to be connected to the Internet.

"It was my vision back then to bring technology here to Bontoc. I wanted students to learn or even just get a glimpse of what a computer looks like," she recalled. "I wanted our graduates to be aware of technology by the time they go to the city so that they won't feel inferior."

After getting the grant from Microsoft, the school also became the beneficiary of the Department of Trade and Industry's PCs for Public High Schools program.

Taguiba said the Internet has "augmented" the school's library since it lacked books. More important, the Internet and technology in general changed the way the younger generation thinks.

"They know now what is happening outside," she said.

School principal Taguiba, however, has a growing concern about the sustainability of the school's satellite Internet access. Currently, Microsoft pays the monthly fee to connect the school to the Internet. Taguiba admitted having no idea how much Microsoft was spending.

Since 2003, the school has earned more than P66,000 from charging minimal fees from students, employees and people in the community. The money goes to maintenance of hardware and software, Taguiba said.

Satellite and mobile phone technologies have also changed the way people live, play and work in Bontoc.

"We have 24-hour cable television here in Bontoc," said Joel Fagsao, chief executive officer of Xijen Institute of Technology.

Almost all households in Poblacion have a mobile phone, added Cuteng.

"Cell phones are also stolen here," she said.

Despite its isolation from the fast-paced life of urban cities like Manila or Baguio, Bontoc is now connected to the rest of the world via the Internet and CNN. And just like that, the isolated Mountain is no longer alone.

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Smart, Globe need Sun competition to push RP mobile industry: Alcatel

By Leo Magno

REINAUDO

LEADING mobile operators Smart Communications and Globe Telecom need competition from Sun Cellular to move the Philippine mobile industry forward, according to an executive from telecom firm Alcatel.

Alcatel Asia Pacific president Christian Reinaudo said stiff competition among the three providers is needed to spur the Philippines' adoption of new technologies.

"Between Smart and Globe, the competition is not enough. A third competition is needed," said Reinaudo. "This will probably be initiated by a third player to spark competition and take Smart and Globe to another level (of technology)."

Sun's less than 2 million subscriber base is behind Smart and Globe, whose combined subscriber base is about 28 million. However, Reinaudo said Sun can learn from the mistakes of its two rivals.

"(Sun) invested in the industry late, but their advantage is that previous problems of the other two carriers have already been solved," he said. "It's a novel situation. I have no doubt that (Sun) will make it."

Reinaudo added that competition in the Philippine mobile space is migrating from the acquisition and retention of subscribers to good marketing of mobile services, with the exception of Sun which is still "a step behind and is still trying to gain market share."

"Operating the network is no longer the main problem. It's about marketing services well," he said. "Look at SMS. The Philippines has been a good success story as far as texting is concerned. Years ago, analysts would have never predicted that of all the countries in the world, SMS would boom in the Philippines. It's probably because Globe and Smart marketed (SMS services) well."

An offshoot of the migration of mobile competition to the marketing of services, coupled with the need to cut costs, may even lead to partnerships among Smart, Globe and Sun. Reinaudo cited the cases of Telstra and Hutchison Telecoms forming a partnership in Australia, and competitors Optus and Vodafone which decided to set up a joint company to ease rising costs on new technologies and service deployment.

"Carriers that have been enemies are deciding to minimize their capital expenditures," he said. "That's because deployment is not the place where competition is happening. It's in the services. Globe and Smart may even put up its own partnership to cut costs and then compete in the marketing of services."

Sun's mobile infrastructure was built from the ground up on Alcatel technology. Meanwhile, Alcatel is a fixed equipment supplier for the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company—Smart's parent firm—and Innove, a daughter firm of Globe.

CyberPress elects new officers

THE INFORMATION Technology Journalists Association of the Philippines Inc., more commonly known as CyberPress, elected its new set of officers last week during its annual media training seminar at the Development Academy of the Philippines in Tagaytay City.

Abigail Ho of the Philippine Daily Inquirer was elected president, replacing Erwin Oliva of INQ7.net who served for three consecutive terms. Other officers elected were Melvin Calimag of Manila Bulletin (vice president for internal affairs), Edwin Sallan, contributor for Today (vice president for external affairs), Bing Ramos of Philippine IT Update (secretary), Marco Abella of Gadgets Magazine (finance committee head), Lawrence Casiraya of Computerworld Philippines (membership committee head) and Alex Villafania of INQ7.net (constitutional amendments).

Appointed sectoral representatives were Jing Garcia of Manila Standard (for print) and Erwin Oliva for online publications.

The organization has already drawn up its list of activities for 2005 starting with the 3rd CyberPress Annual Forum to be held in January. The event, which used to be the year-end culminating activity of the group, will have gaming as its theme. This is in recognition of the role of gaming and other forms of electronic entertainment that have emerged recently as new avenues for business growth and recreation.

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RP roadshow draws flak from foreign traders

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINES, which recently embarked on a global roadshow to boost investor interest, instead drew critical remarks on its fiscal reform agenda and the terms of a recent $1-billion bond offering.

This, according to banking sources, was the reason behind the sudden resignation of the country's investor relations officer Cora Guidote, who said that she could no longer be effective at her job after being put on the hot seat during the roadshow.

Banking sources close to Guidote said some fund managers, such as Rubicon, had accused the Philippines of making a "fundamental error" that adversely affected the pricing of the recent $1-billion bond float.

The skeptics also claimed that hedge funds had been given more bond allocation during the recent $1-billion offering, which only put long-term investors at a disadvantage because some of the hedge funds were sold even before the investors acquired their shares.

Compared to the country's previous roadshows, most of the investors left with a negative perception of the country, said sources privy to the meetings which Citigroup and HSBC arranged.

Despite the criticism, HSBC and Citigroup still believe that investors will continue to support the Philippines' future foreign borrowings, sources said.

A government official said it was not fair to blame the recent global bond offering for the dire results of the roadshow.

"There was no question that there were investors who were not happy, but I would think there were those who were happy," the official said.

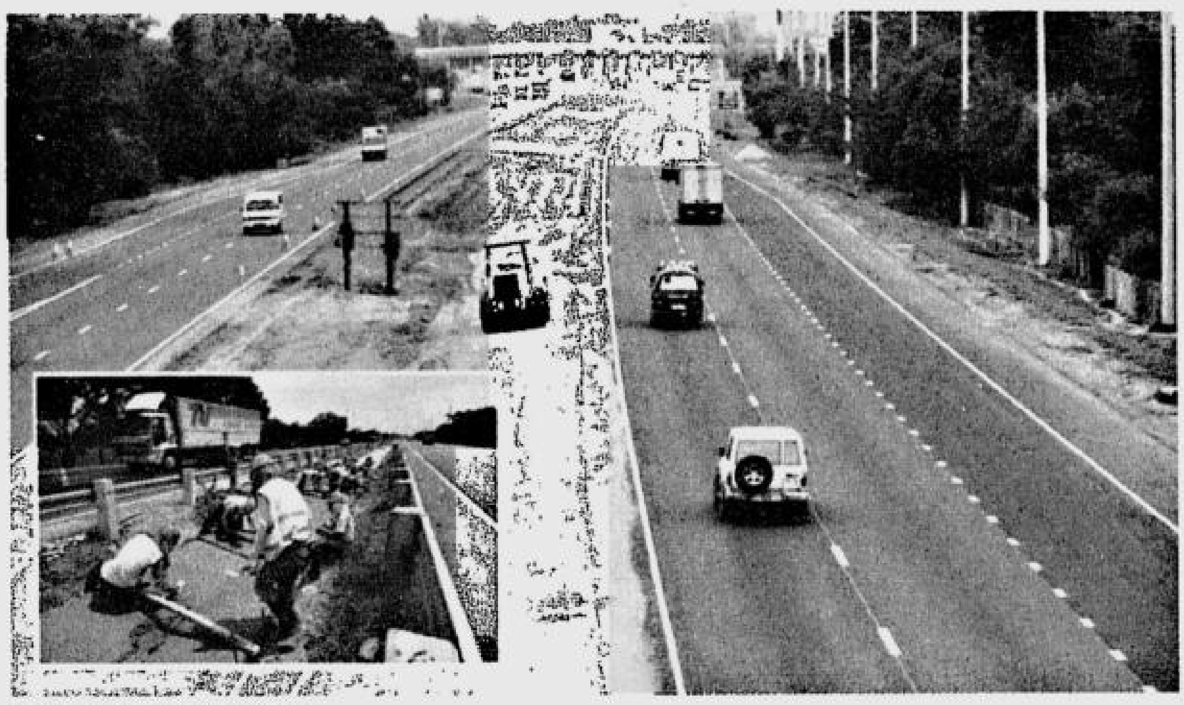
The official said the investors who got an allocation were rewarded because they ended up with a higher yield, while the hedge funds which resorted to short-selling—or selling the bonds they did not own yet—lost in their bets.

Unfortunately, none of the officials present during the meeting was able to satisfy the investors' queries on the controversial bond offering. The architect of the bond float, Finance Undersecretary Eric Recto, was not present during the roadshow.

The sources said Guidote herself thought that the bond offering was "indecisive" and "not well-planned" and was thus unable to quash the criticisms during the roadshow.

"At the end of the day, the offering should not have been a unilateral decision," the source close to Guidote said. "The finance department should have listened to inputs from foreign investors."

"They were placed in hot water during the roadshow, especially in Europe," the source added. "The government must really investigate this offering."



ROAD WELL TRAVELED
Vehicles stream through the northern exit, of the North Luzon Expressway linking Manila with northern Luzon. The $371-million joint venture project between the government and a consortium of Filipino, French and Australian firms will be completed in December and will be able to handle at least 170,000 vehicles a day. AFP

Investors said to be driven away by high power costs

By Ronnel W. Domingo

INDUSTRIES are hard pressed to find ways to insulate themselves from rising electricity prices which industry leaders fear have been driving other investors to pack up and transfer to other countries with lower costs.

Dan C. Lachica, president of First Sumiden Circuits Inc., said large power users were very concerned about the local power rates. Lachica said that potential investors, as existing ones, were being driven away.

First Sumiden, a member of the Semiconductor and Electronic Industries of the Philippines Inc., manufactures flexible printed circuits for computer hard disc drives.

"The cost of power in the Philippines is two to three times higher that those in our neighboring countries like China, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand," Lachica said.

The situation he added, was eroding investments and driving up manufacturing costs.

"For big operations, it may be strategically sound to stay and expand," Lachica said. "But for smaller investments, it is so easy to just pack up and leave."

According to Lachica, new investments are now rare. He cited the case of SunPower Philippines Manufacturing Ltd. where its $319-million project was realized only after it was guaranteed certain concessions including a guarantee of lower power cost.

He also cited how some existing multinational companies were studying their options to expand operations or relocate elsewhere in Asia.

He also said there had been some companies that had been forced to downsize while others had opted to shut down altogether.

One electronics company opted to move to China and left at least 3,000 workers jobless. Its facility has since been converted into a badminton court, Lachica said.

House urged to exempt BIR from Bank Secrecy Law

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue once again has called on members of Congress to include in the tax amnesty bill the provision exempting the revenue agency from the Bank Secrecy law.

The BIR believes that the objective of discouraging tax delinquency may not be met if the revenue agency does not have the power to check on bank accounts of suspected tax evaders.

The Arroyo administration's proposed tax amnesty intends to plug tax leaks by encouraging underground businesses to go mainstream and become legitimate taxpayers through a one-time granting of tax discounts and immunity from suits.

In exchange for the privileges, taxpayers will be required to regularly submit their statements of assets and liabilities, through which the BIR could can readily determine the accuracy of their future tax remittances.

"The problem with the tax amnesty bill is that it does not sufficiently equip us to go after tax evaders because of the Bank Secrecy law, BIR Deputy Commissioner Kim Henares said during an interview.

The revenue agency has been pushing for a waiver on the Bank Secrecy law since the Arroyo administration announced it would include tax amnesty in its fiscal reform agenda, Henares said. Under the BIR proposal, the revenue agency will be required to exercise confidentiality of information pertaining to taxpayers' bank accounts.

Shipping firms told to plug tax leaks

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue called on the country's shipping industry to patch up the loopholes in the tax remittances of its members which reportedly resulted in huge tax leakages.

BIR officials on Thursday met with representatives of shipping companies and encouraged them to settle their back taxes even before the BIR began auditing their books.

"We told them that based on the initial investigation made, there was really a discrepancy between the revenue they reported and the revenue we think they really earned," BIR Deputy Commissioner Kim Henares said.

The BIR was prompted to investigate the alleged tax delinquency of shipping firms after Congress released a report which claimed that there were about 55 million water-transport passengers in 2002, but that the combined gross revenue declared by shipping companies only amounted to P950 million.

According to Rep. Herminio Teves, who made the exposé on the shipping industry, there was an apparent tax evasion because P950 million in revenue from 55 million passengers implied that ship fare only averaged at P40 each.

Henares said the BIR so far only had an idea of the extent of the tax delinquency of the shipping industry.

The BIR does not have the data on the amount of back taxes of each shipping company because revenue officials still have to begin auditing their books, Henares added.

The BIR official said that during Thursday's meeting, shipping representatives did not try to deny the allegation of tax leakages from their sector.

"(The shipping representatives) were saying they also suspect some companies were under-declaring their income," she said "But of course no one admitted that his or her company was one of those that did not properly pay taxes."

Michelle V. Remo

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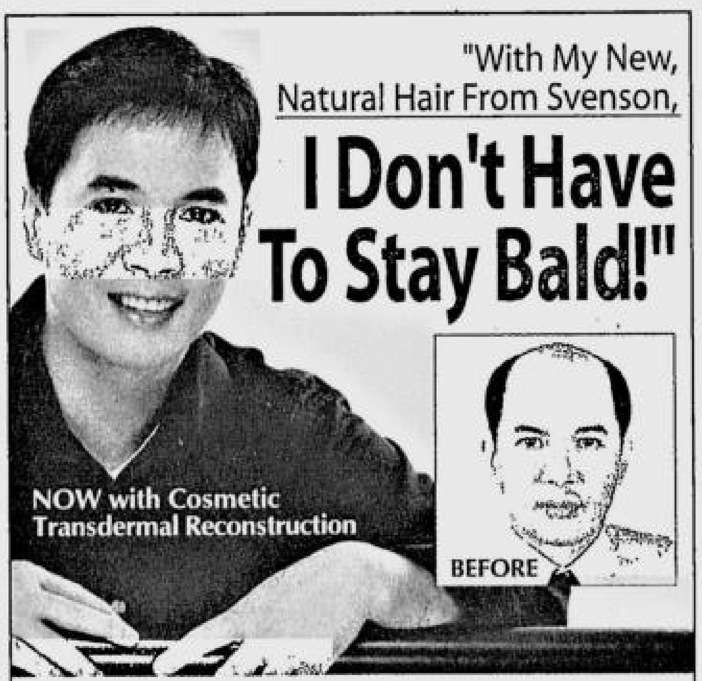

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Four ways to fix the hunger emergency

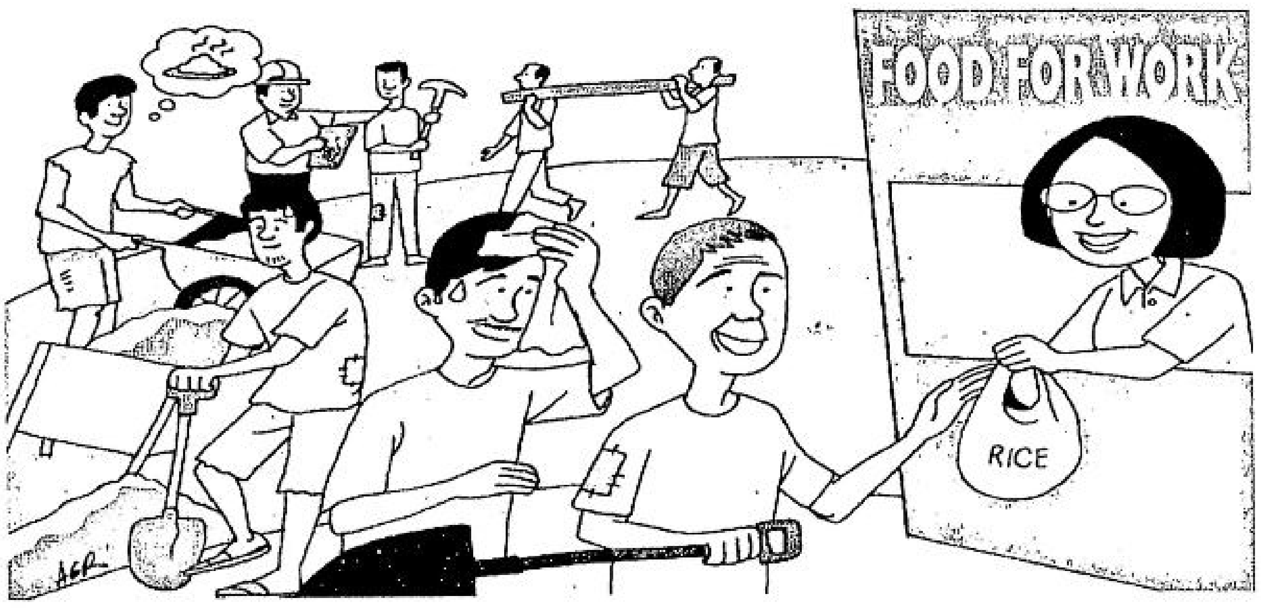
By Dennis M. Arroyo
Contributor

HUNGER is much in the news, thanks to the August 2004 poll of Social Weather Stations.

As much as 15 percent of households experienced hunger during the last three months. That's triple the ratio seen last year. The ratio even hit 23 percent in Mindanao.

What's behind this attack of hunger? One misconception is that hunger strikes only because food supply falls short, or what is called food availability decline (FAD). This isn't necessarily so.

Nobel laureate Amartya Sen says that groups of people can go hungry even when a nation has a rich food supply. A very poor person starves because "he does not have the ability to command enough food."



Unemployment

One key is to look at the purchasing power of this vulnerable group.

The factors to examine are (a) their income, (b) inflation in general and (c) food prices in particular.

Going hungry is an extreme form of poverty, so it does not normally afflict those with formal sector jobs.

Their incomes reach at least the minimum wage.

And even those working in the informal sector—farmers, fishermen, sidewalk peddlers—would use their earnings to prioritize food. They are often among the ranks of the underemployed: working but wanting to get more work.

The most vulnerable sector is not the underemployed, it is the plain unemployed.

As of July 2004, the unemployment rate was 11.7 percent of the labor force.

High prices

Purchasing power has eroded because of the resurgence of inflation. Last September the inflation rate hit its highest level in 45 months.

The 6.9 percent rate is largely the effect of ballooning oil prices in the world market. Families have to contend with costlier diesel fuel, jeepney fares, cooking gas, electricity, even Light Rail charges.

What about food prices? Rice grown by Filipino farmers is expensive—it's around double the price of that from Thailand or Vietnam.

Eating less rice

Because of the price, Filipinos eat less rice compared to their Asian neighbors. Here are estimates coming from the international rice monitor, Riceweb.org.

The following are kilos of annual rice consumption per person from select Asian nations:

Cambodia	169 kilos
Vietnam	165
Bangladesh	150
Indonesia	149
Thailand	109
Philippines	95

Put it all together: high unemployment, rising prices and costly rice. What can be done then about this hunger emergency?

Prices to remain high

The government is in a tight bind. The chaos in Iraq will likely continue. Worse, world demand for oil will rise due to the need for heating fuel in the winter months.

So oil prices will remain high and may climb even higher.

Because of the fiscal crisis, the state has no choice but to let power rates rise to realistic levels. Fees charged by state agencies must still be increased. And government offices simply can't afford to absorb all of those without a job.

Food coupons

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) plans to soon hand out food coupons to poor families.

The problem here is that the limited funds will likely run out after a while, for food coupons are prone to leakages.

That is, money meant for the very poor may end up spent by the less poor, drying up the funds for the former.

Fine-tuned targeting is imperative. The truly hungry would be willing to work for food, while the less poor would look for other jobs that pay better, in cash.

Food for work

There must be a more sustainable solution, and I suggest this package.

1. Prepare a hunger map, identifying the most vulnerable barangays. Because of the margins of error, the SWS hunger data are not precise at the provincial level. They should be merged with the government's data on the poorest provinces and municipalities of the land.

2. Import and stock up on cheap (half-priced) Vietnamese and Thai rice. Distribute the supply to the DSWD branches nearest the hunger-vulnerable barangays.

3. Embark on an emergency food for work program. This is more dignified than giving dole-outs. The jobless repair roads and help build basic infrastructure in exchange for kilos of rice. This kind of deal would draw in the destitute but would not attract the less poor.

4. Charge the bill to the local governments. The provinces and cities must spend on infrastructure anyway, and the expense is small. Paying emergency workers in cheap rice requires a much smaller budget than that for the usual salaries. *Comments to dennisarroyo@yahoo.com*

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Editor Aries Espinosa

Kimbells Pack wins in int'l label tilts

KIMBELLS Pack Inc, a local firm specializing in the design and printing of packaging and self-adhesive labels, brought honors to the country once again by bagging a number of awards in three of the most prestigious international label design competitions organized by the label associations of Europe (Finat), Australia (Latma), and North America (TLMI).

In the Finat competition and out of the 210 entries vying for the 26 traditional category awards this year, Kimbells won for the multi-layered and complex Tanduay "150 Years" promo label as well as for the intricately crafted Kelly Ellis "Neozone Amazing 12" label. Based in The Hague, Netherlands, Finat counts more than 500 members from 40 countries around the world.

In the Latma competition, out of the 23 awards given out this year, Kimbells garnered five, including Tanduay's "150 Years", Del Monte's 202, Pascual Laboratory's Betadine, RDI's Whitening Lotion violator and Bench's Styling and Hair Treatment violator.

Then following Finat and Latma, Kimbells was recently informed that four of its entries won in another competition organized by Chicago-based TMLI, the biggest association of its kind in North America. Joining the competition for the first time, Kimbells has been cited for its Tanduay "150 Years" promo label, with the other three to be formally announced on Oct. 26.

Since 1978, Kimbells Pack has been consistently winning awards in foreign competitions for its designs and executions of labels for local products. It is the first company in the Asean region to win awards from three different international associations practically every year.

Kimbells president Henry Tiu says the awards are not only an honor for his company or for the men and women behind it, but for the country as well. Tiu believes he has made the first step in proving to the world that the Philippines can be globally competitive in the field of commercial art and design and hopes others will follow suit.

2004
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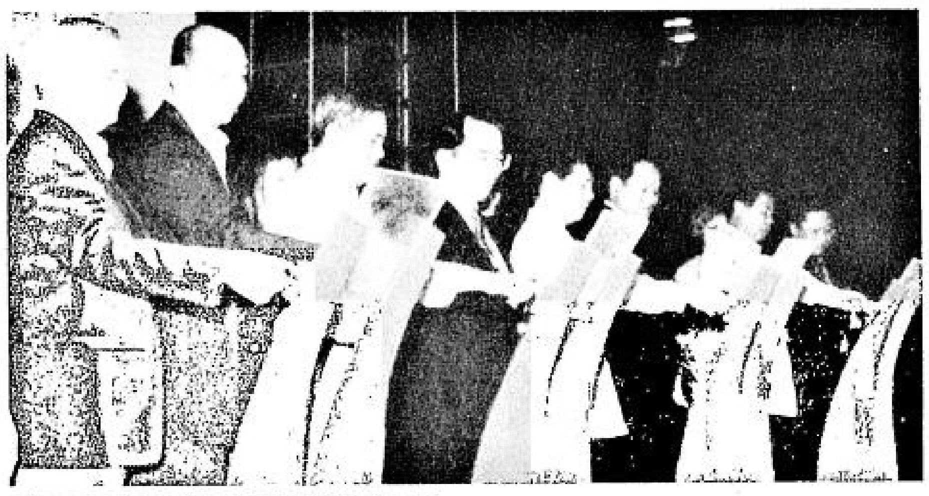
TIU RECEIVES a plaque from one of the 2004 Finat organizers during the awarding ceremonies held in Copenhagen, Denmark. Inset is Pascual Laboratory's winning label.

STUDY GROUP INDUCTED

VAdm Ariston V. delos Reyes, AFP, AFP Vice Chief of Staff and concurrent chair, AFP Technical Working Group for Legislative Affairs, administers the induction of members of the study group composed of selected representatives from the AFP major services TJAG, Otag, AFPFC and J1. Chaired by Comm. Reynaldo T. Basilio, the AJ6, the study group will conduct studies and research to come up with a legislative initiative to push for the separation of the pension and retirees fund from the DND.



PLDT LAUNCHES CEBU INNOLAB

PLDT recently launched its InnoLab, or the Innovation Laboratory and Telecommunications Education Center, in Cebu City. InnoLab is a place where research and development projects can be implemented involving technologies and solutions for clients' communications needs, and for industry-academe-government research collaboration. It is also a place where PLDT can showcase its cutting-edge solutions to clients. Shown here demonstrating biometric identification technology during the launching were, from left, Sec. Virgilio Pena of the Commission on Information and Communications Technology (CICT), PLDT CEO Napoleon L. Nazareno, Cebu City Administrator Juancho Montecillo, PLDT NTT advisor Shigeru Yoshida, Cebu Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Robert Go, PLDT SVP and corporate business group head Ernesto R. Alberto, president of Cebu Educational Development Foundation for Information Technology Consul Sabino Dapat, and PLDT SVP and business development head Ariel A. Roda.

Research institute for neglected diseases opens in Singapore

MORE than a third of the world's population is infected with tuberculosis (TB), and about 2.5 billion people worldwide are at risk of contracting dengue fever.

These alarming statistics have prompted researchers worldwide to reassess the way they look at the so-called neglected diseases and come up with breakthrough compounds that can help treat and combat these diseases.

To help reduce the burden of neglected diseases, pharmaceutical company Novartis AG announced recently the opening of the Novartis Institute for Tropical Diseases (NITD) in the state-of-the-art Biopolis research facility in Singapore. With the goal of advancing biomedical research for neglected diseases, initially dengue fever and drug resistant TB, the institute aims to have at least two compounds in clinical trials by 2008 and one novel and attractive compound available to patients by 2012. The pharmaceutical company conceptualized the noble idea of making these treatments available without profit for countries where they are endemic.

Currently, TB has unfortunately become resistant to most antibiotics used today to treat the disease, with very little research into new treatment options for many years. The same goes for dengue fever, no major discovery effort has been directed to new treatments despite significant unmet medical need. The establishment of the NITD in Singapore is seen to benefit developing countries like the Philippines where neglected diseases like tuberculosis and dengue are endemic.

'The Palawan Experience' in tour packages

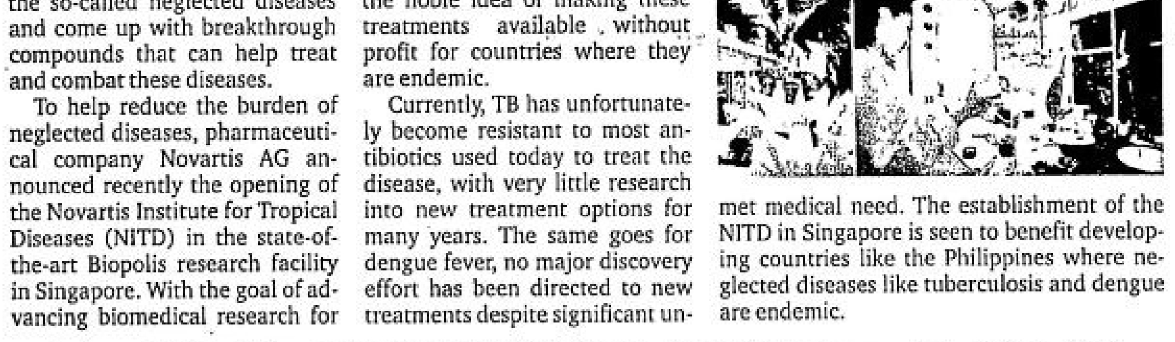
THIS year, The Palawan Experience (PAX), The Legend Hotel's exclusive tour package to the country's last nature frontier, is available in two special packages to traveling families and couples on a tour.

Billed as the Palawan experience with family bonding that matters, PAX has put together a special family package at P7,999 net per adult where up to two kids, aged below 11 years old and sharing bed with adult companions, are free on tour fees and meals. It is inclusive of a 3-day 2-night room accommodation based on twin sharing at The Legend Hotel Palawan, full board meals with option to dine on the second night, a half-day Honda Bay island cruise aboard the MB Legend of the Sea on day 1, an underground river adventure on day 2, tour host services, welcome drinks, and roundtrip airport transfers.

A couple package ideal for honeymooners or for pairs who simply want to spend a great time together is offered at P6,999 net per person. It also includes a Honda Bay island cruise, underground river adventure, 3-day 2-night stay at The Legend Hotel Palawan, all meals with an option to dine on the second night, tour host services, welcome drinks and roundtrip airport transfers.

The Honda Bay island cruise comes with an early lunch at the hotel and fun activities such as snorkeling and fish feeding. The whole-day underground river adventure includes a side trip to the Vietnam Village and lunch at Taraw lodge in Sabang Beach.

For reservations and information, call the Manila sales office at 638-9256 and 58, or visit the Legend Villas at 60 Pioneer corner Madison Streets, Mandaluyong, or log on to www.experiencepalawan.com.ph or www.legendhotels.com.ph.



A-PLUS AWARDED OUTSTANDING QUALITY-VALUE PAINT

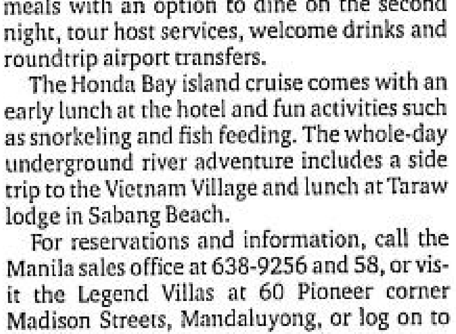
FH Colors & Coatings Corp, through its flagship brand A-Plus House Paint was awarded Outstanding Quality-Value Paint at the 15th Annual National Consumers Awards night Aug. 27 at Le Pavillon. Shown accepting the award from lawyer Quirino Marquinez, president of the Consumers Union of the Philippines, are Rene Estanislao, senior manager, Sherwin Ko, market development manager, Angel Belizario, production manager, Grace Lombos, assistant manager, Rose Gallana, plant manager, and Gemmar Gibe, research and development head.

Product FILES

Monster truck

THE CUSTOMIZED Ford F-150 of Wheel Gallery-MKW won top honors in the recently concluded Sport Truck and Custom Car Show at SM Megamall. Boasting of a Geiger-inspired "Alien" visual paint graphics by Airart Asia and Sny Design, and paint by K-92, the F-150's stunning exterior is wrapped in a specially designed widened body by A-Toy Bodykits, tuned suspension by Bilstein, HID headlamps from Xenon bulbs, Audio-Video set up from Pioneer, speakers by Bose acoustimass, leather interior by Equipt, and rides on massive 24x10-inch chrome MKW wheels shod in 24-inch BF Goodrich tires. Also part of the project F150 are Meguiar's, Winner Car Graphics, Fremuff, Jetcar, Dub Magazine and Hummer Philippines.

The F-150 garnered the Best in Show Sport Truck, Best Body Kit, Best Wheels, Best American Truck and Best Conversion.



"This pick-up truck represents the teamwork of the best custom builders in the automotive aftermarket industry. When good quality products are fused together with the right idea, it is really hard to beat," states Sammy Liuson of Wheel Gallery. For details about the truck, visit www.conceptonewheels.com.

Bits & Clips

Ice-maker on exhibit

A KOREAN product designed for Filipino small and medium-scale entrepreneurs will be introduced to the Philippines in an exhibition in Glorietta, Makati, from Oct. 11 to 13. The product is a machine that makes soft "snow" or ultra fine ice that can be used for a wide variety of drinks and meals. It was developed by Vision Scientific Co Ltd and has already become a hit in South Korea because its product is smoother and, as such, more enjoyable. James S. Kim, president of Altair International Trading Corp (AITC), exclusive distributor of the machine, said the ice-making machine is simple to operate and make an average of 800 drinks or dishes a day, and can be operated by a single person and does not require big space. Call Joy Bandoy at 634-4424, or e-mail ait@eastern.com.ph.

ink-Man
INK REFILLING CENTER
ink-Man

INK-MAN FRANCHISE SIGNING

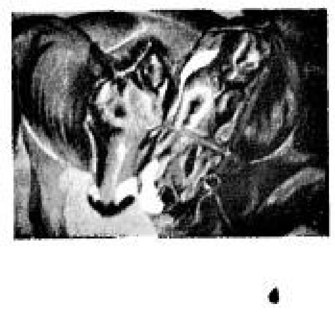
Ink-Man Ventures Inc recently inked a franchise contract with Mubarik Cheema (middle) for the establishment of an Ink-Man Ink Refilling Center in Naga City, Camarines Sur, Bicol province. Shown signing the contract with Cheema is Ink-Man Ventures Inc managing director Jhun Tizon, while franchise sales consultant Nanie Dinglasan (right) witnesses the signing

DAP's 1st grad program

THE DEVELOPMENT Academy of the Philippines, through its Graduate School of Public and Development Management, is offering its first Productivity and Quality Management graduate education program this year. Relatedly, the Certificate Courses offered are Customer Satisfaction and Relationship Management from Oct. 11 to 19 and Strategic Human Resource from Nov. 15 to 23. Interested parties can call 631-2167 or 631-0921 to 30 local 167, telefax 631-2119 and look for Nancy Paredes or Lily Nangca.

Pets in paintings

ANIMAL and art lovers alike would definitely enjoy a unique experience of viewing art paintings of pets and other animals in pastels by vet-painter Boy Tan. His artworks are on display at The Art Gallery of Philippine Heart Center at the ground floor lobby from Oct. 4 to 23. For inquiries, call 371-5425 or 373-4727.



Joselle is 4

JOSELLE Lou Airis Angeles Quiroz, youngest daughter of Aristeo and Lourdes Quiroz, celebrates her fourth birthday on Wednesday, Oct. 13 at the family residence in Malate, Manila.

Dimensions of the fiscal problem

MAPping THE FUTURE

By Romeo L. Bernardo

THE GOVERNMENT'S deficit has stayed above 4 percent of Gross Domestic Product. To correct the imbalance, savings should be increased from current levels.

Instead of channeling increases in private savings to more productive uses, these are instead used to finance not government investment but actually government consumption. Investment for the whole economy has actually been dropping notwithstanding the increase in private savings.

This trend will have implications for banks as well as stability of the financial system. If the deficit were due to government spending on basic services and infrastructure facilities, it may be less of a problem as we would reap the benefits of these expenditures over time.

The deficit problem, however, is due to inability to raise the needed revenues as seen in the declining in tax effort.

Because of the inability to raise needed revenues, government has been resorting to expenditure cuts to tame the budget deficit. Government expenditures have been maintained at roughly around 20 percent since 1997.

Unfortunately, there is very little expenditure left to cut those representing expenditures on salaries and service, transfers to LGUs and the like—about 90 percent is non-discretionary.

The government is not able to spend enough on basic goods and services such as education and health, and is not able to invest sufficiently in infrastructure.

RP lags the rest of the region in capital expenditures. Without revenues and little flexibility to cut expenditures, the government is set to resort to borrowing to plug the deficit.

A comparison of government debt as a percentage of revenues rather than just as a deficit of GDP shows an even worse situation. RP pays public debt not with GDP—RP pays with revenues.

A declining revenue also translates into higher overall borrowing costs. This affects not only government, something that we in the private sector feel as well. This affects our cost of borrowing and at the end of the day, the cost of services that we provide.

With the banks heavily investing in government securities, there is a risk of fiscal stress being transmitted into the banking sector.

On the foreign denominated issues, it's estimated that 25-40 percent of outstanding ROPs are held by the local banks. This translates to something like P9B of the P14B FCDU investments being in ROPs.

RP fiscal situation is compounded by its exposure to various contingent liabilities, which at any time can cause further damage to RP's fiscal health.

We just witnessed this in RP's absorption of some P500 billion of Napocor's debt. The actual accumulation in debts has really been far higher than what the national government could explain.

So there remains a large gap. I think it's about 25 percent on average every year. It's rather about much more than the 150 percent additional deficit.

The day before yesterday, it was PNB and DBP that cost the accumulation in the public sector debt. Yesterday, it was the central bank debt problems, today is Napocor and maybe tomorrow, it could be the needed adjustments in the pension funds.

It's quite clear that the fiscal situation is serious and requires action now to prevent further escalation of the debt which, if not done, can take on a life of its own. The key to ensuring debt sustainability is to keep the debt to GNP ratio constant by running sufficient primary surpluses.

Based on former Socio-Economic Planning Secretary Philip Medalla's assessment, RP needs to achieve a primary surplus of between 1.5-3 percent of GNP to prevent the debt ratio from going up (1 percent of GDP is roughly about P50 billion).

Over the past three years, the highest primary surplus attained by government was only about 0.6 percent of GDP. The good news is that it's not impossible [to increase this] as government in the mid 90s has obtained surpluses of around 2 percent, and not just primary, but the bottom line surplus.

While improving tax administration is always good, the government cannot rely on this to produce the needed results.

Over 95 percent of tax collection is really based on self-assessment. The challenge before the BIR is to be able to change the risk-reward trade off. It requires change in peoples' attitudes, something that cannot be done in a very short period.

There was also a structural erosion in the revenue base. For example, excise taxes and fuel taxes which used to account for 2.6 percent of GDP are now only about 1.3 percent of GDP because of a lot of indexation.

Government really cannot rely on tax administration only in order to produce the needed results.

The only way forward is for government to raise its revenues especially the tax effort through legislation. These kinds of new taxes will have to have a high yield, should also be as neutral as possible. If targeted at a specific sector, for example telecommunications, it has to have clear eco-

DIMENSIONS / B2-5

THE COUNTRY'S FIRST INDEX-TRACKER MUTUAL FUND REMAINS BULLISH OVER THE MEDIUM TERM

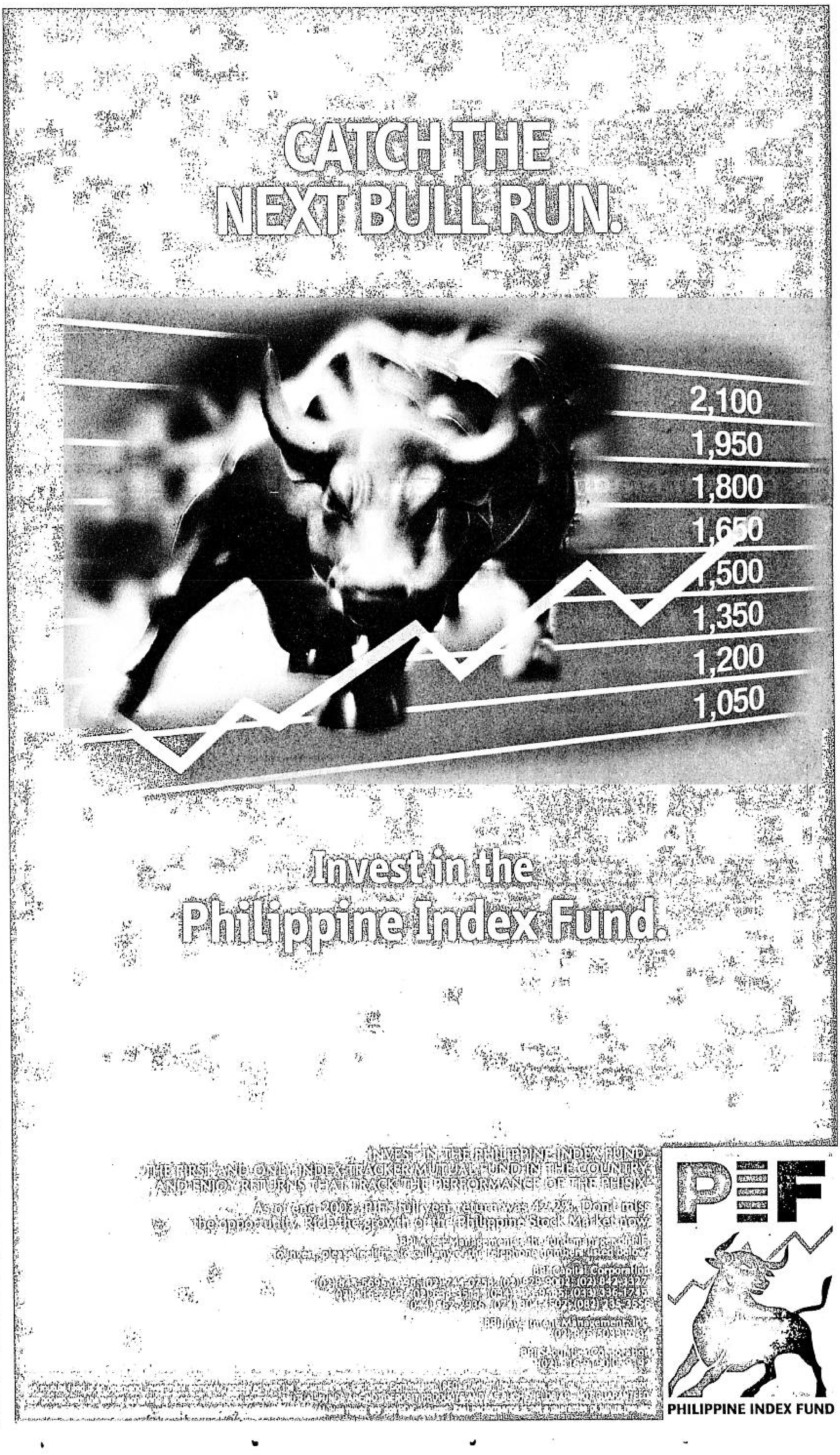
The local stock market remained generally upbeat during the 3rd quarter as buying momentum for fundamentally attractive stocks continued to drive the local bourse upwards. By September, the Phisix closed at 1,761.57, up by 11.53% for the 3Q and up 22.13% year to date. Given the positive investor sentiment in the market, The Philippine Index Fund (PIF) proves to be the best bet in investing in Philippine equities delivering a phenomenal return of 27.68% (YTD absolute as of October 6, 2004), outperforming all other equity mutual fund returns posting an average return of 14.85%.

BPI Asset Management and Trust Group (BPI AMTG), the fund manager of PIF, remains positive in their outlook for the stock market in the medium term given strong corporate earnings growth, the resurgence of foreign fund inflows and the expected passage of revenue generating tax measures which would improve the government's fiscal position. While the PHISIX has recently broken above 1800 level, a 4-yr high, this is positive indication as it is now poised to re-test the 2100 level providing a potential upside of 19% from end-September prices.

Philippine Index Fund, the country's first and only index tracker mutual fund, provides an alternative for equity investors who believe in the potential of the domestic equities market at the same time enjoying risk diversity as well as low entry costs. Designed to mimic the movements of the PHISIX (Philippine Stock Exchange Composite Index), PIF has been successful in tracking the returns of the index while taking advantage of the bottoming out of the market in the 4th quarter of 2002, translating to an impressive 42.2% ROI for 2003. As the forerunner of index-tracker funds in the country, PIF is currently the only mutual fund in the country to be granted by the Securities and Exchange Commission an exemption from the 20% diversification limit imposed on local mutual funds, thus enabling it to mirror the exact weightings of the issues as contained in the PHISIX. PIF started with just PhP58.5Mn in net asset value in December 2002 but has already grown to PhP381Mn by end of September 2004.

PIF is expected to tap a larger retail market of longterm equity investors while at the same time creating greater awareness on equity investing among small individual investors. This is because with a minimum investment of only P50,000 during the initial offer period, investors are already effectively investing in a diversified portfolio of 33 stocks comprising the PHISIX, with the lowest fees and commissions compared with investing in PHISIX stocks on their own and without the hassle of daily individual stock monitoring. Employing the distribution network of licensed mutual fund sales agents of BPI Capital Corporation, BPI Investment Management, Inc., and BPI Securities Corporation, PIF is expected to provide support to the domestic capital markets through its availability to investors of modest means.

ADVT



INVEST IN THE PHILIPPINE INDEX FUND
THE FIRST AND ONLY INDEX-TRACKER MUTUAL FUND IN THE COUNTRY
AND ENJOY RETURNS THAT TRACK THE PERFORMANCE OF THE PHISIX.

As of end 2003, PIF's full year return was 42.2%. Don't miss the opportunity. Ride the growth of the Philippine Stock Market now.

[illegible]

BPI Capital Corporation
[illegible]

BPI Investment Management, Inc.
[illegible]

BPI Securities Corporation
[illegible]

Efficient distribution brings quality products at stable prices

EVER wonder why even if you're in a seafood restaurant, anywhere in Metro Manila or a little further south in Cavite, you get to eat your favorite grilled tuna *panga* or belly from General Santos City like it were just hauled off from the sea?

At a fishing village cum restaurant in the historic town of Kawit in Cavite, diners can't seem to have enough of the grilled tuna. The dish, says its youthful owner, is the resto's bestseller. Though his supply of tuna still comes from GenSan, it is delivered to his place still sea-fresh. "I don't know how they do it, but what I am only most concerned about is the quality of the fish I get," he says.

Elsewhere in Luzon, housewives enjoy buying right in their neighborhood market fresh fruits grown in Davao, the sweetest corn harvested in GenSan, or vegetables or fresh beef and pork carved out of livestock transported from Bukidnon.

A new mode of shipping transportation called Road Roll-On Roll-Off Terminal System (RRTS), a flagship program of President Macapagal-Arroyo, is making possible a faster and more efficient movement of people and goods between islands and ports. Now it takes shorter time for the produce of Mindanao to reach Manila and other parts of Luzon.

How RRTS works

This is how RRTS works. The trader or his driver drives any vehicle containing cargo into the ship via a ramp and, at the port of destination, disembarks inside the same vehicle carrying the goods, and motors off to the trader's business address.

As the system doesn't require off-loading from trucks, the cargo arrives at the port of destination with less damage, if none at all, and at lower handling cost. With these advantages, the trader is able to sell the products fresh or in good quality at a stable price to a greater market.

RRTS is one of three components of the government's Sustainable Logistics Development Program (SLDP). The other two are the grains highway and cold chain. The food highway takes care of the better transport of grains, fruits, vegetables, fish, chicken and other perishable items.

Being active partners of SLDP, both the land and shipping transportation sectors have sought more government support in the area of infrastructure development. In the case of the maritime sector, it has asked for the upgrading of local ports, preferential tax rates like those presently enjoyed by domestic airlines and overseas shipping, and further liberalization of policies and regulations.

Capital spending

Presently, capital spending on roads is on the downward trend with a 2004 backlog amounting to P65 billion, while domestic ports, according to the shipping sector, are in a sorry state and cannot guarantee maximum security of people and cargo unlike airports.

The domestic maritime industry has also urged the government to further liberalize the cargo handling system in the country and to produce facilities for bulk shipments that would enable its ships to link up with international logistics network the way Clark and Subic have a center for logistics in the region.

RRTS, backstopped by a no-nonsense infrastructure development support, provides the key to solving the problem of manufacturing firms of how to deliver goods from the points of production to destination by more than a third. According to an AIM professor, the actual production itself eats up a mere 30 percent of lead team. It is inbound and outbound logistics that account for customers' waiting time; the bulk of operation costs, therefore, is due to the sourcing and delivering goods, he explained.

Logistics is the process of planning, implementing and controlling the efficient and effective flow and storage of goods, services and related information from point of origin to point of consumption for the purpose of conforming to customer requirements.

Each firm participating in the supply chain must try to achieve superior logistical performance to effect positive gains in terms of quality, cost, timeliness and efficiency, according to the Transport and Logistics Center.

Distribution plays an important part in the nation's economic progress. Thus, as a trading nation, it needs an efficient and cost-effective system of goods distribution by air, land and sea. Toward this end, the government has embarked on a vigorous infrastructure development program. Lack of budget, however, has prodded the government to ask the support of the private sector in this concern.

Study finds out how many ads viewers can tolerate in an hour

By Abigail L. Ho

MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando and Adboard chair Cerge Remonde.
JOSEPH AGCAOILI

HOW MANY times have you sat in front of your TV set wishing there will be fewer commercials?

Whether you're a fan of TV commercials or a voracious TV addict who just wants his daily dose of telenovelas, an ongoing study on the amount of advertisements a normal human being can tolerate may just lead to more balanced decisions on commercial minutes in the future.

The Advertising Board of the Philippines (AdBoard)—an umbrella organization of advertising agencies, advertisers and media and advertising services groups—commissioned a study that will serve as a basis in regulating the number of advertising minutes that can be loaded on TV programs every hour.

Depending on the result of the study, Philippine Association of National Advertisers (Pana) president Raul Alvarez says the number of advertising minutes for every hour of programming can go below or above the existing 18-minute standard. Or stay the same.

The six-week study, being conducted by the Market Opinion and Research Society of the Philippines Inc. (Mores), tackles the correlation between advertising clutter and product recall as well as consumers' attitude toward and perception of TV ads.

The first part of the study aims to show whether or not findings of a study done in 1995 still hold true, even after nine years of technology advances and some culture evolution.

The 1995 study showed that advertising clutter was seen as an "intrusion" to TV viewing. This then led viewers to leave the room, switch channels or just not pay attention when TV commercials were playing.

As a result, the opportunity to see advertising messages became lower, leading to even lower product recall.

More options

Alvarez says the ongoing study should present various options to the advertising world, not just in terms of how many minutes of commercials should be present in every hour of programming but also how these commercial minutes should be spread to gain maximum value out of them.

"There's a possibility that it can go lower (than the current 18-minute standard loading), stay the same or go higher. There can even be a range, depending on the program. The results of the study will determine this," he says.

He adds it was even possible for some shows to have more allowable commercial minutes than others, although the number of minutes should fall within an approved range.

The ongoing study, he says, should help all concerned stakeholders to gain maximum return from their ads while ensuring that consumers' perception of TV ads did not deteriorate.

The results of the study will be available by mid-November.

Abiding by the rules

While waiting for the study's results, AdBoard member-organizations Pana and the Association of Accredited Advertising Agencies (4As) agreed to comply with the standard 18-minute commercial load limit for every hour of TV programming.

"In the spirit of self-regulation, we are encouraging all Pana members, together with our partner ad agencies and media independents, to observe the 18-minute rule until results of the ongoing AdBoard study are released," Alvarez says.

To ensure strict compliance with the 18-minute rule, he says all advertising materials that would be sent to TV networks for telecast would have a caveat that if these would be beyond the 18-minute rule, these should no longer be shown.

Certain "unwritten" sanctions would be enforced if these warnings go unheeded, he says.

For one, the advertiser could demand additional spots, treating the commercial aired beyond the 18-minute rule as a commercial that was supposed to be aired but was never aired.

Another sanction could be nonpayment for the aired spot if it came onscreen after 18 minutes of TV commercials had already been played on a program hour.

Policing other media

Alvarez says television was not the only medium that advertisers would work on uncluttering.

"We will also do a clutter study for print. We're just prioritizing now. We're just doing TV first," he says.

As of now, no studies on determining print media clutter and how these affect consumer perception and product recall are in the pipeline.

3 dream machines. 3 easy-own schemes. Fulfill your fantasy.

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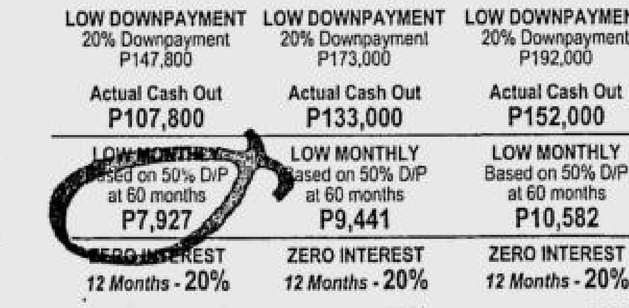
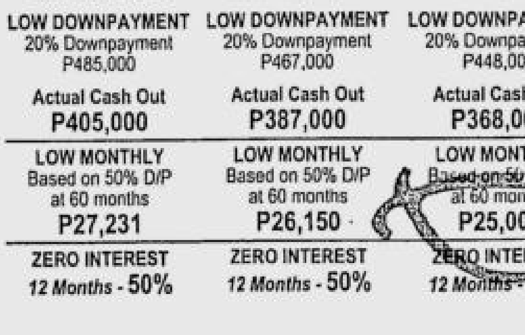
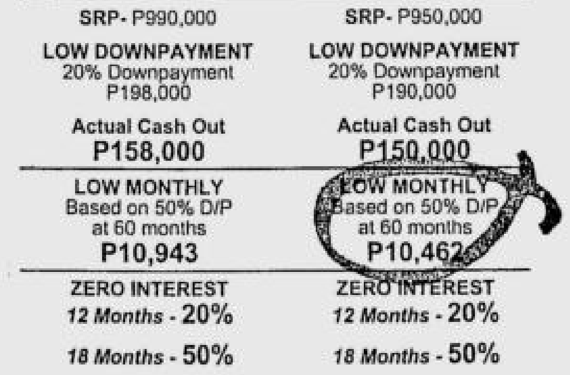
PATROL! P368,000* downpayment

URVAN! P150,000* downpayment







Nissan Frontier III 4x2 M/T (STD) 2.7S	Nissan Frontier III 4x2 M/T (Elite) 2.7E	Nissan Frontier III 4x2 A/T (Elite) 3.2AT
SRP- P739,000	SRP- P865,000	SRP- P960,000
LOW DOWNPAYMENT 20% Downpayment P147,800	LOW DOWNPAYMENT 20% Downpayment P173,000	LOW DOWNPAYMENT 20% Downpayment P192,000
Actual Cash Out P107,800	Actual Cash Out P133,000	Actual Cash Out P152,000
LOW MONTHLY Based on 50% D/P at 60 months P7,927	LOW MONTHLY Based on 50% D/P at 60 months P9,441	LOW MONTHLY Based on 50% D/P at 60 months P10,582
ZERO INTEREST *12 Months* - 20% *18 Months* - 50%	ZERO INTEREST *12 Months* - 20% *18 Months* - 50%	ZERO INTEREST *12 Months* - 20% *18 Months* - 50%

Nissan Patrol 4x4 A/T Gas	Nissan Patrol 4x4 A/T Diesel	Nissan Patrol 4x4 M/T Diesel
SRP- P2,425,000	SRP- P2,335,000	SRP- P2,240,000
LOW DOWNPAYMENT 20% Downpayment P485,000	LOW DOWNPAYMENT 20% Downpayment P467,000	LOW DOWNPAYMENT 20% Downpayment P448,000
Actual Cash Out P405,000	Actual Cash Out P387,000	Actual Cash Out P368,000
LOW MONTHLY Based on 50% D/P at 60 months P27,231	LOW MONTHLY Based on 50% D/P at 60 months P26,150	LOW MONTHLY Based on 50% D/P at 60 months P25,008
ZERO INTEREST *12 Months* - 50%	ZERO INTEREST *12 Months* - 50%	ZERO INTEREST *12 Months* - 50%

Nissan Urvan Escapade	Nissan Urvan Shuttle/VX
SRP- P990,000	SRP- P950,000
LOW DOWNPAYMENT 20% Downpayment P198,000	LOW DOWNPAYMENT 20% Downpayment P190,000
Actual Cash Out P158,000	Actual Cash Out P150,000
LOW MONTHLY Based on 50% D/P at 60 months P10,943	LOW MONTHLY Based on 50% D/P at 60 months P10,462
ZERO INTEREST *12 Months* - 20% *18 Months* - 50%	ZERO INTEREST *12 Months* - 20% *18 Months* - 50%

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3 YEAR WARRANTY 100K KM

Trust group says your money can go a long way

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

HOW FAR can your P50,000 go?

According to the Bank of the Philippine Islands' (BPI) Asset Management and Trust Group (AMTG), it may go a long way.

AMTG officials have suggested that, rather than buying a cellular phone with your well-earned money, why not dip your feet into stocks?

AMTG has set up the Philippine Index Fund (PIF), has created the country's first index tracker fund to provide an alternative for equity investors who believe in the potential of the local stock market.

The AMTG, one of the biggest fund managers in the country, uses its network of licensed mutual fund sales agents in BPI Capital Corp., BPI Investment Management Inc., and BPI Securities Corp., to sell stocks under the Philippine Index Fund.

AMTG officials expect that the low minimum initial investment amount—say your P50,000—will open the door to a larger retail market of long-term equity investors when they introduce the stock market to these small individual investors.

PIF draws its inspiration from the first United States index tracker fund, the Vanguard 500 Index Fund, which the Vanguard Core Management Group created in 1976.

The Vanguard Fund had an initial value of $11.4 million and tracks the S&P 500 index.

Now, the indexing giant has 37 index-tracker funds with $296 billion in assets under its wing. The massive users of these funds in the US are usually state pension funds.

At home, the stock market is generally considered off limits to the faint-hearted.

But with the PIF, the AMTG says that the risk is cut to a minimum because the fund managers will put your money in all 33 stocks that make up the Philippine Stock Exchange composite index (Phisix).

The fund mimics the movement of the Phisix. Last year, following its soft launch, the PIF managed to come up with decent returns of as much as 42.2 percent.

THE COUNTRY'S first index tracker fund aims to provide an alternative for equity investors who believe in the potential of the local stock market. AFP

The fund started with just P58.5 million in net asset value in December 2002 and has grown to P340 million as of August this year.

The fund is also headed by experts who manage a fixed income fund worth P20.5 billion, and a dollar fund worth P4 billion.

"It's a better alternative for investors who may not have the time to invest individually," said Adelbert Legasto, AMTG head.

When asked whether the PIF would directly compete with brokers, Legasto replied: "No, it would even encourage more investments in the market."

Some brokers say an investor can actually beat the index by investing in selected stocks that you expect to make sharper gains than the whole market. But when an investor puts his money in this type of mutual fund, he can just sit down, relax and watch his investments grow.

BPI AMTG also makes it easier for the investor to park his money in this mutual fund because it watches the market everyday.

"Sometimes you wonder what stocks to invest in," Legasto said. "(Other brokers) don't accept P50,000 as an investment since it is not substantial enough to entertain. Here, you simply go to BPI and *kami na bahala don* (we'll take care of the rest)."

While many see the stock market as being more volatile than other financial markets—and therefore riskier—the market still has the potential to offer better returns.

"Last year we had a return of 42 percent and, year to date, it's 20 percent," Legasto said.

The fund manager sees the index challenging the 1,900 level this year, with net foreign buying at P1.7 billion for September alone, and an increased daily turnover of P607 million.

So, is it too late to jump into the market? Not according to the BPI fund managers.

Fired up by hopes of stronger corporate earnings and the passage of revenue-generating tax laws to plug the budget leaks, the Phisix had been climbing steadily these past few weeks, breaching record highs. Recently, the index touched a new four-and-a-half year high, accompanied by growing trade volumes.

"Although investors continue to accumulate stocks with strong fundamentals on second semester good earnings expectations, investment experts are expecting periodic market corrections," the BPI AMTG said. "These normal occurrences seen after continuous run-ups in the market afford an accumulation window for investors."

As the fund managers at BPI AMTG would like to say, "don't get left behind, catch the next bull run."

Dimensions . . .

From page B2-3

nomic rationale.

Among government's proposed measures that should be endorsed are: (1) Two-step EVAT, (2) Indexation of sin taxes, (3) Excise tax on petroleum products and (4) Rationalization of fiscal incentives

The other measures that BIR Commissioner Parayno is already working on to improve collections, such as the creation of a performance driven systems for revenue agencies and the increase in administrative reforms, also need to be supported.

In conclusion, while the fiscal problem is serious, it is not insurmountable. What is needed is for the government to act now with a credible package of tax measures that signals its intent to solve the problem. If we don't do this, we will be faced instead with non-elective surgery not too distantly.

(Speech delivered by the author, a former finance undersecretary, now president of Lazaro Bernardo Tiu and Associates Inc., during the Aug. 9 MAP general membership meeting. Feedback at mapsec@globenet.com.ph)

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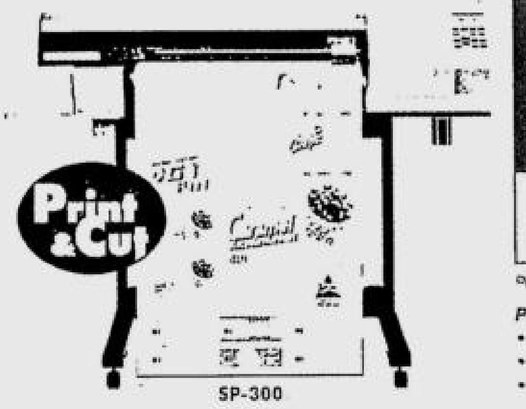

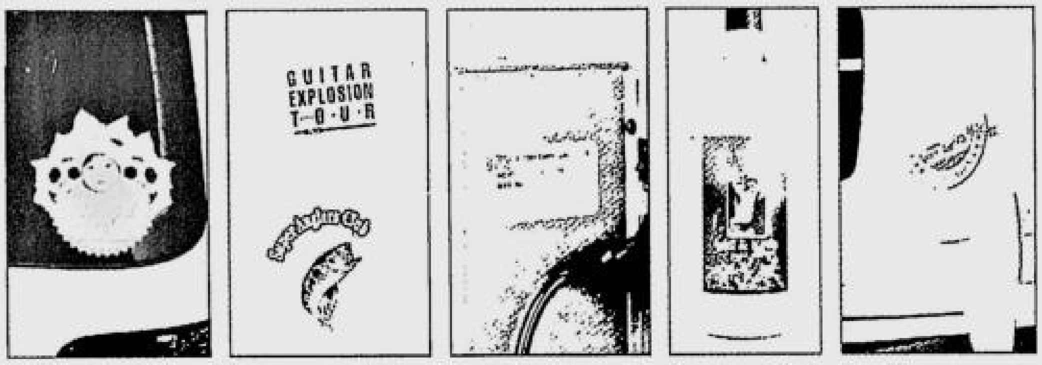

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THE MUCH coveted Cannes Lion

Cannes 2005: The Hunt Begins

By Celine R. Madamba

After a week-long celebration of the world's finest ads in 2004, "Cannes Lions in Manila" has finally ended but not without a challenge posed to the Philippine advertising industry.

After five days of showcasing some 300 winning entries in outdoor and print ads, television, and direct mail through exhibits, public screenings and special forums, does the industry now have the passion and commitment it needs to win the country's first Gold Lion next year?

According to Ayala Corporation President Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala II, keynote speaker at the opening ceremony, "there is no reason why the Philippines cannot carve its own niche in the global arena, especially in the creative arts and advertising, given the natural competitive edge we possess."

That edge, Zobel de Ayala contends, consists of innovative talent, our proficiency in English, high literacy levels, adaptability, and an openness to western culture. He believes that exposure to global trends and practices through events like Cannes Lions in Manila will help Filipinos "assimilate new and fresh perspectives that can complement and even highlight the uniqueness of our own culture."

"It is in benchmarking ourselves against the best in the world that we get a better sense of where we really are and what we ought to do to improve and raise previously set standards," emphasized Zobel de Ayala. "The global market leaves us a choice to either seize its opportunities or be left marginalized."

Besting more than 18,705 entries all over the world, the Lion winners represent today's standards of creative excellence and world-class advertising in the field of print, outdoor, TV, and direct marketing. With less than 3% of entries usually making it, winning a Cannes Lion is an incredible feat.

For more than 60 countries who participate in Cannes every year, it becomes a source of national pride. For advertisers, it demonstrates the effectiveness and universality of their communication messages and branding campaigns. For agencies, it is clearly an affirmation of creative genius that earns them both respect from clients and a reputation in the industry.

According to Terry Savage, CEO of the Cannes International Advertising Festival, "the ability for agencies to win in a variety of countries establishes their ability to cross borders and show they understand different cultures and in doing so they improve their potential in a pitch. It also shows they are at the top of their field in an area of product differentiations."

Since the inception of the Cannes International Advertising Festival in 1954, the Philippines has only won a bronze Lion in the area of direct marketing for BCD Pinpoint's "Dos por Dos" campaign created for the Philippine Animal Welfare Society.

To rally the industry towards greater creative achievements in a global scale, the Philippine Daily Inquirer, the country's official Cannes Festival Representative, and the Advertising Board of the Philippines staged "Cannes Lions in Manila".

"Like an architect and a developer, the agency and the client have to create synergy, which will fulfill their individual objectives at the same time a common vision. Through this event, we hope to have inspired them towards establishing the Philippines as the center of creative excellence in Asia", stated Inquirer President Sandy Prieto-Romualdez.

While this aspiration may seem distant given the country's single win at Cannes, creative directors, marketing professionals and agency heads agree that the arrival of Cannes winners in the Philippines is paving the way for genuine transformation in the advertising mindsets of agencies, clients and the general public.

OPENING cocktails at Greenbelt Park

"Up until the Cannes Lions in Manila, we have never had the chance to talk to much less explain to our clients the value of winning a creative award," stated Micky Domingo, Executive Creative Director of McCann Erickson Philippines. "Any effort to win was dismissed as a self-indulgent exercise which served the purpose of merely massaging one's ego. There was no talk about how an award-winning ad could do wonders for brands and the people behind them. Sure, maybe only a few heard the message. And fewer still will accept the idea. The important thing is that the word has been planted."

According to DDB Philippines Executive Creative Director Roger Pe, "it was the best thing that ever happened to the ad industry. Things like Cannes in Manila come once only in a blue moon or once in our lifetime. I asked all my staff to go on the last day of the exhibit. For bringing the Cannes winners to Manila, the Philippine Daily Inquirer made sense to all of us creatives in the industry."

TBWA Managing Partner Tong Puno, believes that the greatest impact of the event was the "discernment among clients and agencies alike that Cannes is the ultimate barometer for advertising creativity" but states that "it is now up to these parties to make potential gold winners for themselves in the country."

The next Cannes International Advertising Festival will be in June 2005 in Cannes, France. According to Savage, the keyword for Cannes in 2005 is "Evolution" with new innovations such the inclusion of a radio category for the first time in 2005 (Design and PR categories have been moved to 2006) and a Production Showcase giving production companies an opportunity to highlight their work.

In light of these developments, the Philippine Daily Inquirer together with the Advertising Board of the Philippines has vowed to help the industry in its quest for the country's first Gold Lion. Additional forums and screenings are in the pipeline while an information campaign has been launched to generate interest and participation in next year's festival.

According to Chairman Cerge Remonde of the Advertising Board of the Philippines, the Ad Board is committed to the growth of the advertising industry and has allocated P500,000 to send the country's first team to the Cannes Young Creatives Competition next year and P100,000 for each winning entry from the Philippines, whether bronze, silver, gold, or Grand Prix.

For the first time in 2005, the Philippines will also have a judge on the Cannes Press & Outdoor jury to be nominated by the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

Indeed, "Cannes Lions in Manila" may be over but the hunt for creative excellence has just begun.

ZOBEL de Ayala

REMONDE

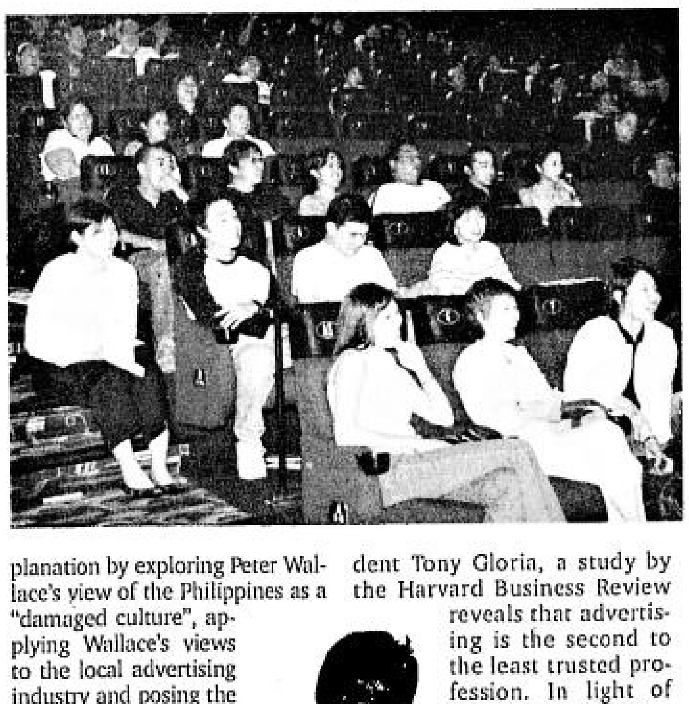
INQUIRER director and Print Town president Dennis Valdes with Inquirer president and CEO Sandy Prieto-Romualdez, French Ambassador Renee Veyret, and Inquirer chair Marixi Prieto.

PHILIPPINE finalists receive plaques of recognition for their excellent showing in this year's Cannes International Advertising Festival. From Left: Inquirer VP Pepito Olarte, TBWA's Evans Sator and Tong Puno, BBDO chair David Guerrero, Inquirer AVP Celine Madamba, BCD Pinpoint president Dickie Soriano, BBDO's Hope Atienza and Susan Dimacali, Inquirer president and CEO Sandy Prieto-Romualdez, and Ad Board vice chair Alvin Manacsa. (Not shown are finalists from Jimenez Basic)

ABS-CBN newscasters Ces Drilon and Pinky Webb host the opening programme

AD AGENCIES FORUM:

What Will it Take to Win a Cannes?



WINNING a Cannes Lion takes more than effective content and creativity. It also requires the proper execution of ideas, a passion for excellence, strong commitment, and synergy between agency and client.

This was underscored during the Ad Agencies forum held at Cinema 3 on the second day of the event. Moderated by Lowe Manila Executive Creative Director Raul Castro, the event gathered some 200 agency heads and creative directors and a panel of prominent professionals from the field of marketing and advertising.

After a screening of Philippine finalists and a review of some of the winning ads this year, the speakers gave their views on winning a Cannes Lion. While none of them proposed a formula to Cannes-worthy ads, simplicity, the use of local color, humor, freshness, and a high level of intellectual astuteness were common characteristics observed in many of this year's winning entries.

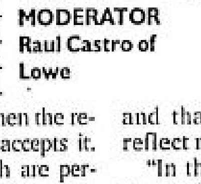
According to BCD Pinpoint Founder and President Dickie Soriano, winner of the country's first Cannes Lion, trust is crucial between clients, agencies and production houses and while ideas are important, "a great idea is only as good as its execution".

This was also emphasized by award-winning Director Raymond Red, who suggested that agencies and clients focus on compelling ideas coupled with excellent execution instead of trying to please the Cannes judges, whose personal biases are unknown to us.

"Freshness and compelling ideas continue to be basic ingredients of good ads," stated Creative Guild President and Leo Burnett Executive Creative Director Lilit Reyes. He also cited the importance of national pride, which has been the single most powerful motivating force behind creative excellence in countries such as Thailand.

Extreme energy coupled with passion to learn the craft are common traits of serious contenders in awards competitions like Cannes. According to Ace Saatchi and Saatchi Director and Vice President for Corporate Communications Sid Reyes, "there is a certain intensity, an obsession to win in other countries that is missing in the Philippines. We just don't try hard enough."

TBWA Managing Partner and Executive Creative Director Melvin Mangada ventured an explanation by exploring Peter Wallace's view of the Philippines as a "damaged culture", applying Wallace's views to the local advertising industry and posing the need for radical change in the culture of Philippine advertising.

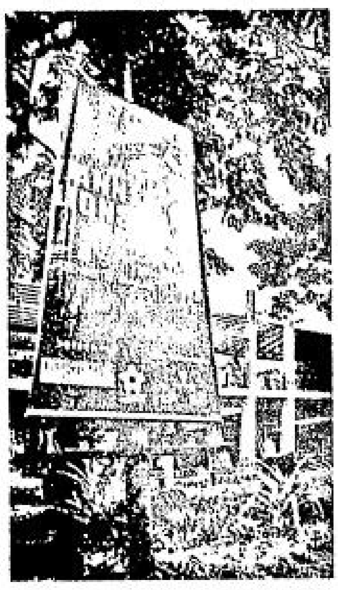

MODERATOR Raul Castro of Lowe

Meanwhile, David Guerrero, BBDO Chairman and Executive Creative Director, emphasized that communication is only complete when the receiver of the message accepts it. "People hate ads, which are perceived as interruption. For ads to be effective, they must earn the interest and attention of people. The difference between the best and worst ads is 4000%."

According to Unitel President Tony Gloria, a study by the Harvard Business Review reveals that advertising is the second to the least trusted profession. In light of this and the fact that there are just too many commercials in television today, Gloria stressed the need for advertisers to develop ads that stand out from the clutter and that explore themes that reflect real people.

"In the Philippines, we focus so much on beauty and glamour," he observed. "We should explore the quirks of being human and the humor that is uniquely Filipino." *Celine R. Madamba*

PANEL of distinguished speakers included TBWA managing partner and executive creative director Melvin Mangada, BBDO chair and executive creative director David Guerrero, Ace Saatchi and Saatchi director and VP for corporate communications Sid Reyes, Jimenez Basic's Don Sevilla, BCD Pinpoint founder and president Dickie Soriano, Unitel president Tony Gloria, director Raymond Red, and Creative Guild of the Philippines' president Lilit Reyes.



CEO FORUM:
Does Creativity Make Good Business Sense?

DURING the CEO forum moderated by BBDO Vice President Susan Dimacali and led by Cannes awardee David Guerrero, some of the country's top CEOs -- Procter and Gamble President Johnip Cua, Splash Corporation President Mars Aaron and McDonald's Philippines President George Yang - observed that creativity is vital to successful campaigns.

According to Yang, while many CEOs tend to fear creative awards, "such accolades are accompanied by impressive market results." He cited McDonald's award-winning ad entitled "Lolo", which not only inspired an increase in per-store visits, top-of-mind awareness, and public perception for McDonald's but also "earned a few million in free publicity".

Cua emphasized the value of taking risks in creativity to enrich the dimensions of a brand. He shared the evolution of Procter and Gamble's ads from traditional formulas of song and dance to ads that engage audiences with wit, story lines and emotion.

If there is one thing that binds all award-winning ads, it is creative freshness and a strong emotional connection to consumers. According to Cua, "we have to move from branding to bonding."

Both agencies and clients agree that ads today must be distinctive, witty and emotionally relevant to consumers to be worthy of recognition. To agencies, that recognition is best translated into awards; to clients, it is best measured by the effectiveness of ads in solving clients' problems, whether it be increasing awareness or improving sales.

"Pragmatic creativity", according to Aaron, is the key to the successful agency-client partnerships. The challenge of clients today is to make their money work harder and to effectively differentiate their brands and services from the lot. Agencies must address this concern with creative solutions that are both locally and globally competitive. Only when clients are convinced that agencies are prioritizing their needs over creative awards will they be more willing to take more creative risks.

According to BBDO Chairman and Executive Creative Director David Guerrero, taking risks can mean greater results. "Unless your product is significantly better than your competition, average advertising will have average returns. Unexciting ads will lead to unspectacular growth."

He cited a 1987, 1994, 1996, and 2002 study of the 200 most awarded advertising campaigns in the world, which were measured either on hard sales data or on image or awareness change. About 83% of such campaigns were described as "meeting or exceeding the objectives of the client". In some cases, they exceeded the objectives as much as 400%. Campaigns that were not described as successful were mainly due to low media spend as the ads lacked visibility among audiences.

To ensure that advertising makes world-class standards, Guerrero suggested synergy between clients and agencies and recommended that clients consider setting aside five percent of their marketing budgets for one or two "award-winning" projects.

"If it works, you'll have gained a disproportionate return on your money," added Guerrero. "If it doesn't, who knows -- you might still go down in the record books as winning the country's first Cannes Lion for advertising." *Celine R. Madamba*

THE CEO Forum, which was held in My Cinema, was jampacked with presidents, marketing professionals and ad agency heads who listened intently to the speakers, after enjoying a brief screening of winning TV ads from around the world.

SPLASH CEO Mars Aaron

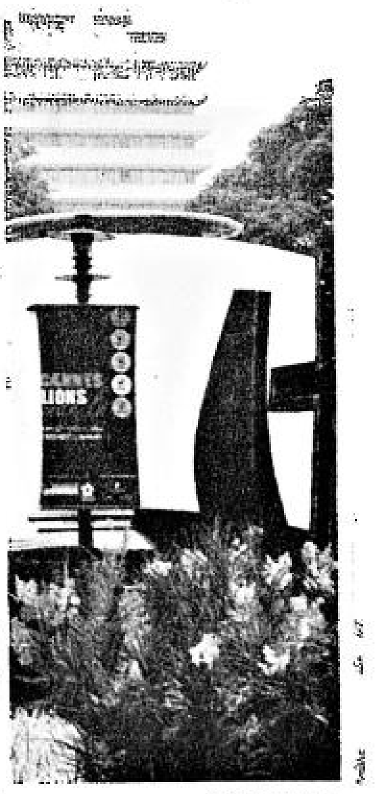
P&G president Johnip Cua

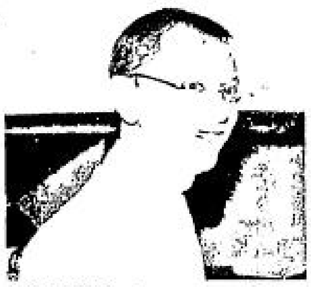
MCDONALD'S president George Yang

FORUM moderator BBDO president Susan Dimacali together with Golden Arches Development Corp. (McDonald's) president George Yang, Splash Corp president and CEO Mars Aaron, Inquirer president Sandy Prieto-Romualdez, Procter and Gamble president and CEO Johnip Cua, and BBDO chair and executive creative director David Guerrero.

CANNES LIONS IN MANILA HIGHLIGHTS

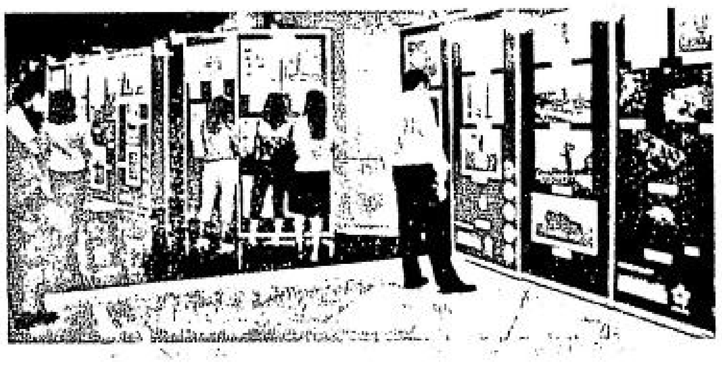
GUEST Speaker Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala II formally opens the Press, Outdoor and Direct Exhibit of Winners together with 'Cannes Lions in Manila' chairs Celine Madamba and Alvin Manacsa. More than 2,000 people are estimated to have visited the exhibits and attended the forums and screenings during the week-long activity held in Greenbelt 3.





MARCH Ventosa, managing director, Hemisphere Leo Burnett

CANNESLIONS



MARILES Gustilo, president and CEO, Lowe Lintas

ENJOYING the festivities are Inquirer VP for advertising Pepito Olarte, Well Advertising president Ernie Hernandez, TBWA managing partner Tong Puno, OAAP president Jun Perez, Adidas marketing manager Angelica Suiza, Globe Telecom AVP Jones Campos, and ASAP director Cergen Go.

AMAR Gambol, Mon Jimenez, Abby Jimenez, and Matec Villanueva of Jimenez Basic.

BLEN Fernando, marketing manager of Alaska, and Rey Icasas, president of Ace Saatchi and Saatchi.

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Co-Chair: Alvin Manacsa, Ad Board of the Philippines

Committee Heads/Members:
Raul Castro, Lowe Lintas
Susan Dimacali, BBDO Guerrero Ortega
Dickie Soriano, BCD Pinpoint
Micky Domingo, McCann-Erickson Philippines
David Guerrero, BBDO Guerrero Ortega
Eugene Demata, Ace Saatchi and Saatchi
Lilit Reyes, Leo Burnett
Nandy Villar, McCann-Erickson Philippines
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Is it necessary to say why you're going on leave?

GOODNESS GRACES

Lia S. Bernardo

Q: IS IT compulsory to state the reason of your leave even when you are entitled to a work leave? Work leave means you can do whatever you want for the particular day, right? Does a company have to know what are you going to do or where you are going?

A: You are not required to state the reason of your leave provided that you are availing yourself of your allotted work leave days.

Q: Could you please give me some guidelines on business letter writing? My boss expects me to write his letters for him and I am lost half the time.

A: Business letter writing is not really about creative writing. Thus, it is possible to learn how to write an effective business letter.

Basic structure

Business letters can be divided into two main categories, those that request and those that respond. All letters contain three main elements:

1. Opening (one paragraph; do not exceed four sentences)
2. Body (one or more paragraphs and vertical lists)
3. Closing (one paragraph; do not exceed three sentences)

Request/inquiry Letter

I. Opening

1. How do you know the reader?
2. Who are you?
3. What, in general, are you asking for?

Establish your relationship with the reader and your credibility, then make a general request to identify the subject, or main intent, and focus the letter.

II. Body

1. What do you want?
2. How does providing what you want benefit the reader?

Show your reader consideration by making the body easy to scan. Use numbers or bullet lists, and keep sentences short and precise. Phrase questions so that the reader will know immediately what you want, why you want it and how you will use it. Express how answering the request will benefit the reader.

III. Closing

1. What do you want the reader to do? When?
2. How can you be contacted?
3. Express appreciation.

Restate your general request and provide a deadline. Provide contact information for credibility (i.e., Should you need further information, please call me at 816-3698).

Revise

Tighten up your writing by deleting any unnecessary words. Remove any content that distracts from the main intent of the letter, regardless of how well it is written. Make sure the most important points are expressed in simple sentences.

Check your spelling and grammar. Read the letter sentence by sentence to make sure you did not miss anything.

How to respond to a request/inquiry letter? (Positive Response)

Subject Line:

What is the date of the request letter and subject?

Opening:

Why are you granting the request?

Body:

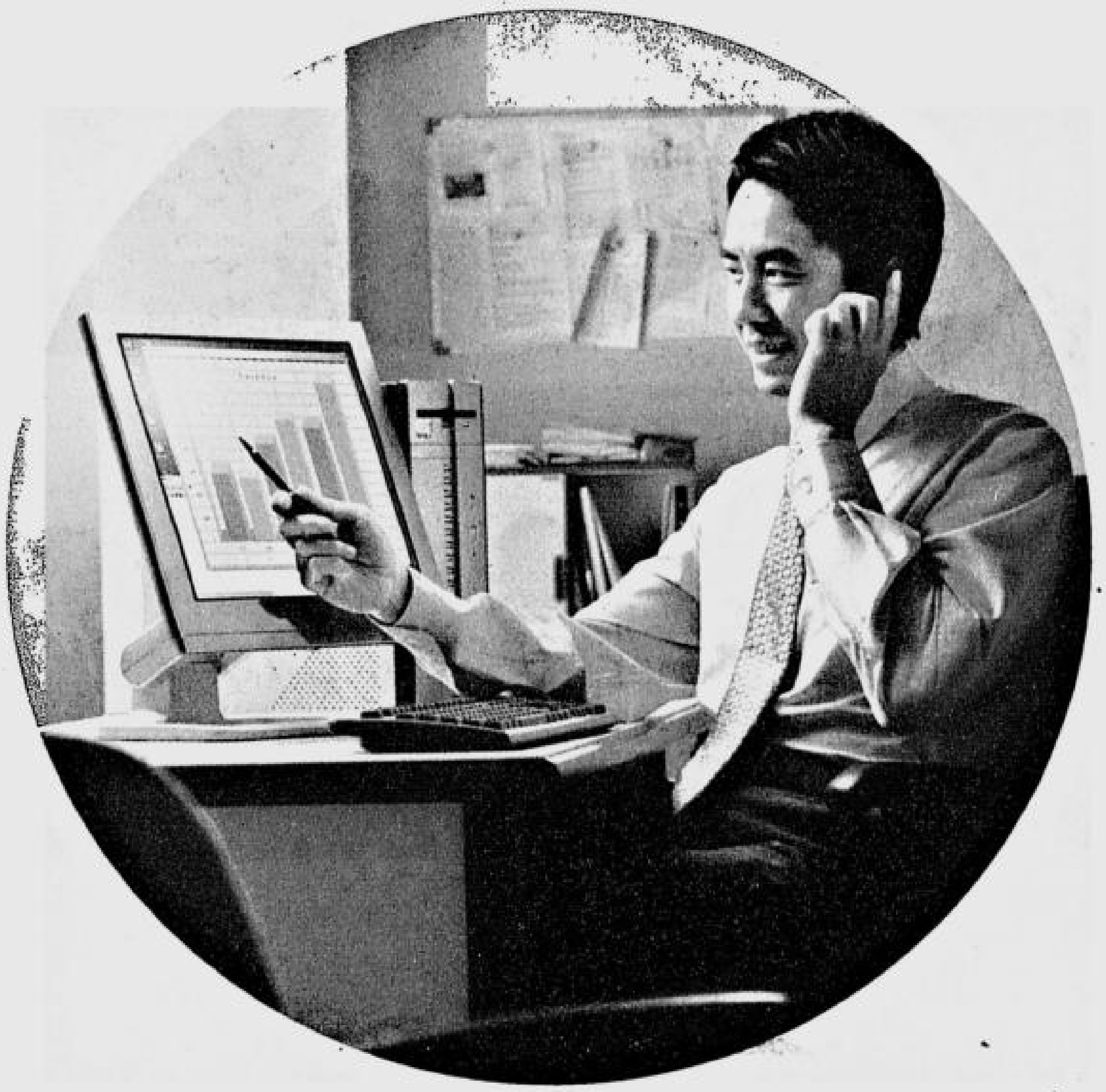
What are the answers to the request? Answer each question using a list.

Closing:

How can you be contacted?

Positive, friendly closing, without clichés.

E-mail your business etiquette queries to etiquetteconsultants@hotmail.com names of senders will not be published.



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DR. KLAUS Toepfer (left), executive director of the United Nations Environment Program with Masamitsu Sakurai.

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THE RICOH Group not only complies with environmental regulations, they take it upon themselves to achieve corporate targets in ways and means that do not further stress the environment. For example, Ricoh has developed quick start-up (QSU) technology, enabling their machines to save energy and recover quickly from energy-saving mode, and thus lessening the emissions released to the atmosphere.

Ricoh factories and facilities are designed and operated in consideration of preventing pollution, effective utilization of energy and resources, as well as responsible disposal of waste products. Care is taken to ensure minimal environmental impact and maximum safety throughout every step of production. And in every country or region where Ricoh conducts business, they maintain close ties with the community, while operating on an atmosphere of transparency concerning their activities and conservation efforts.

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Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**
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More mind games from Alex Garland

The new novel by the regular Manila visitor behind 'The Beach' and '28 Days Later' will either give you a killer head trip or a nasty head cold

the coma
alex garland
author of the beach and 28 days later
illustrations by nicholas garland

By Ruel S. De Vera

ONE can only expect the unexpected from Alex Garland. From damning paradise-lost vibe of "The Beach" to the gritty Philippine setting of "The Tessaract," he has always distinguished himself with his very spare, compact prose, as well as his inventive, unusual, sometimes downright weird sense of narrative.

Yet he can be brilliant even in his other work. Check out his screenplay for "28 Days Later," surely the most stylish zombie script since George A. Romero's original "Dawn of the Dead" script.

Which is why Garland's "The Coma" (Riverhead Books, New York, 2004, 220 pages) represents something typical of Garland: it is short, yet may entail a huge risk.

Garland has always been a love-him-or-hate-him proposition, but "Coma" is his most polarizing project yet.

Written in brief chapters of anything from two to five pages, "Coma" is an urban nightmare of sorts. Carl is apparently a hardworking management-type who, while on his way home on the train, gets beaten into a coma while trying to defend a woman being attacked.

That's when "Coma" gets into its groove—or its depths, depending on your taste—as readers are faced with a book that portrays Carl's seeming emergence from the coma, only to state that he is, in fact, still in the coma. Or is he? Garland keeps turning the tables on the reader so many times, everything blurs into a whopper of a trip through the Land of Carl.

Trapped

It thus becomes Garland's—or Carl's—meditation of what it's like to be trapped in your own mind, moving from deconstructed clichés such as seeing his own body from the outside, to a woozy visit to friends and daydreaming that seems real:

"In fact, the implications were almost limitless. If I couldn't differentiate between hallucination and reality, it was hard to conceive of anything certain I could use to define myself. I might be a different age from the age I believed I was, or a different gender. I might not be walking down a street but standing in a field, or lying in a room. At that moment, on my slow walk to the hospital, it seemed to me that everything was up for grabs. I could be anything with a consciousness."

Now, it's up to the reader to judge whether or not "Coma" is a feat of writing wizardry or a literary snow job dressed up in snobbish attire. It is admittedly confusing in parts and

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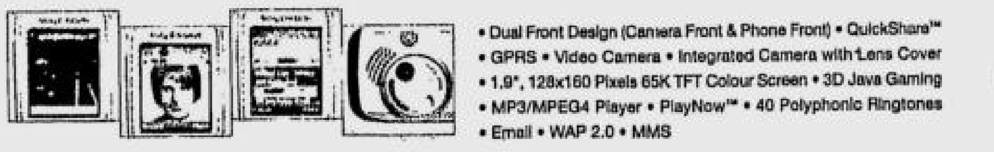

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The ultimate pregnancy book

MILFLORES Publishing, Inc. has released "Baby Love: A Pinay's Practical Guide to Prégnancy," by Marivi Soliven Blanco and Ipat Luna.

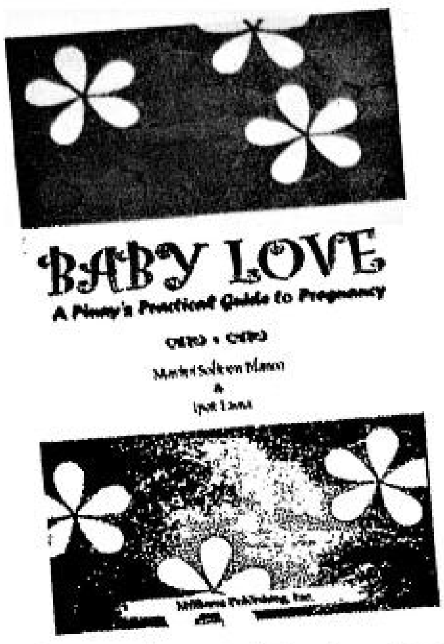
"Baby Love" was authored by two Filipinas who both recently gave birth, to help other Filipinas navigate their nine months of pregnancy—of clumsiness and bloat—with as much grace and humor as possible. Written in non-technical language and in a breezy style with lots of outrageous humor, this guidebook is guaranteed to cheer up expectant mothers while providing them with the essential information for a safe and comfortable pregnancy.

The book covers the first through third trimesters, including breastfeeding and infant care, and offers sound advice on how to cope with a wide range of issues and problems that all mothers-to-be will face: how to handle pregnancy heebie-jeebies, how to help partners become fathers, how to build a sensible wardrobe while expecting, who to tell first, how to fly as a solo parent, and even how to avoid naming the baby after Auntie Ipighenia.

It offers the latest information on the nutritional needs of pregnant and lactating women, on why mothers should breastfeed, and on how they can do it as comfortably as possible. It has a useful resource listing of options of medical practitioners and facilities, support organizations, information websites and stores that can meet the expectant mother's needs.

"Baby Love" is available at all National Book Store and PowerBooks branches at P300 per copy.

Call 7216431 or e-mail milflores@pacific.net.ph.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More mind games from Alex Garland

From page C1

bracingly insightful in others. "You dream, you wake: you live, you die," Garland writes. "Somehow it occurred to me that if you die, you wake." He goes on to say that "waking is rising, and dreaming is sinking. You wake up, you fall asleep."

Some will find Garland's prose too choppy, maybe a little too gimmicky. But for those who have always liked Garland's style, the paragraphs tingle with trademark suspense and mystery. Garland helps along "Coma's" hallucinatory texture with moody chapter illustrations by his father, artist Nicholas Garland.

Similarly, one might find Garland's plot a brilliant inward quest for meaning and definition, or a vague mess of little narrative tricks, a question of whether "Coma" is mind-altering lit or smoke-and-mirrors exposition. Garland's work has often seen the content reflected in the form, thus here he seems to be dissecting the idea of a coma while Carl is seemingly trapped in a coma.

Another vintage Garland theme here is the person lost in a hostile home, whether it's a lost soul in grungy Manila, idyllic Thailand or infested London.

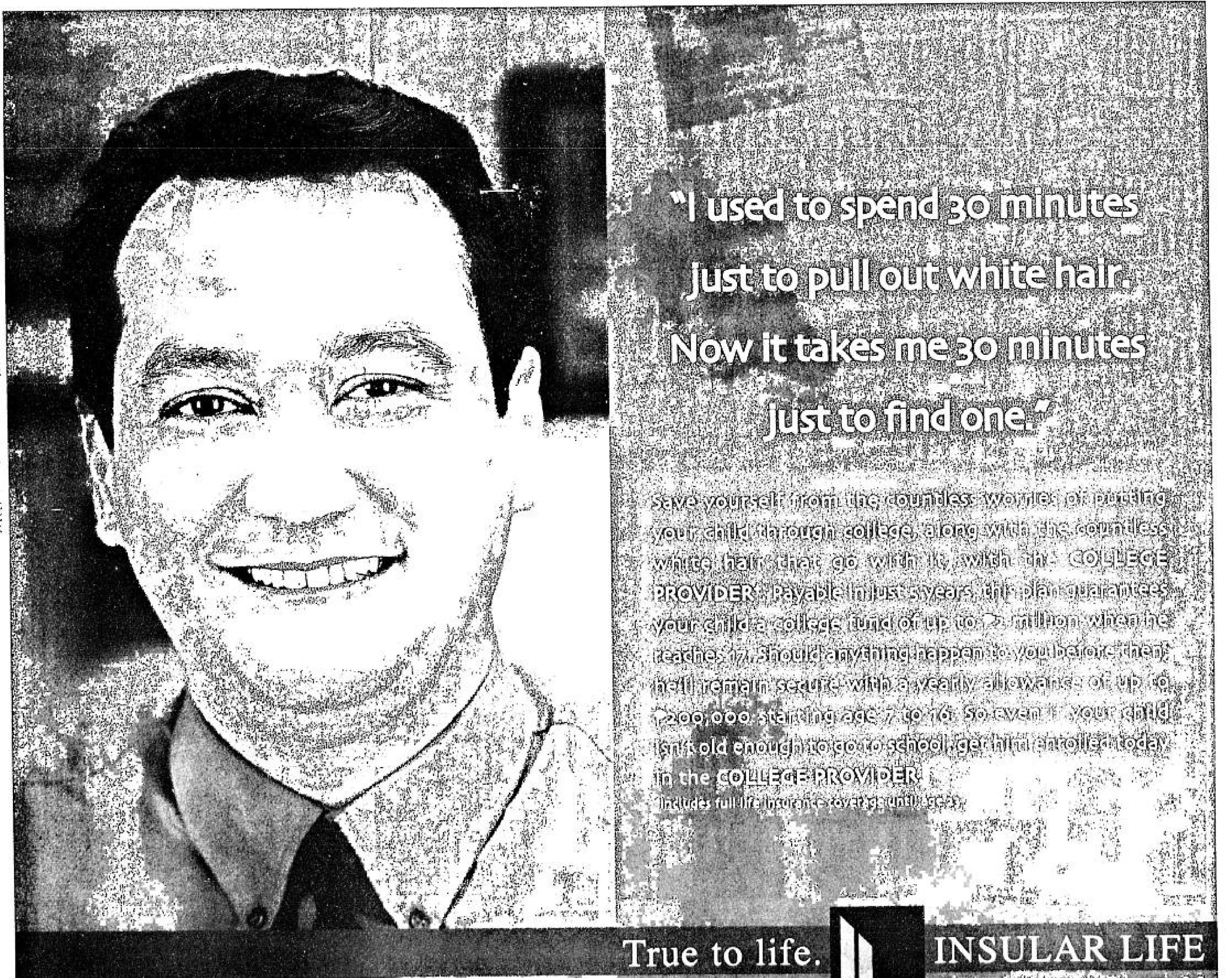
What it all amounts to is Garland taking the reader on a trip through, effectively, his own head—and it's a trip that'll give you either a profoundly affecting head trip or a vicious head cold you won't soon forget.

"The surprise for me is that I can remember exactly what losing my mind was like," Garland goes on to say. "It's tangible to me; it's a taste in my mouth. And, even more surprisingly, I think I'm able to describe it."

It remains a good question whether or not readers will be able to do the same after finishing "Coma." It'll either convince you of Garland's greatness or annoy the heck out of you. Or both.

Whatever the case, "The Coma," with all its narrative trap doors and dead ends, is Garland as his unusual self, with yet another take-it-or-leave-it experiment that doesn't compromise or leave much middle ground.

Available in hardcover at National Bookstore and PowerBooks.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A poetess' perpetual quest for home

From page C0

"Two hungers/ Cut by the edge/ Of stars" (Scars); "Reflecting/ The pale fullness/ Of Ourselves/ Back to/ The moon" (Full Moon).

Her latter works are more narrative in nature, some written as poetic anecdotes or prose poems, like "Stuffing," "Acid," "The Last Rite," "For Neil," "Home," "Movement," "Kabuki," "In the Heart of Malate" and "Hunger." Their virtue, despite their sometimes apparent lack of lyricism and organic unity, resides in Guevara's virtuosity to verbalize the pain of parting, which by itself is the most sonorous of sufferings.

For a sensitive reader of her ouevre will soon discover that Guevara's poems are awash with leaves in the form of images, similes and metaphors, as well as leaving in its diverse verbal variations: "The wind leaves/ Its voice/ In this house... The dead leaves/ Are fallen tongues" (Chime House); "We are speckled by pieces of sun/ Sliding between the leaves" (Boulevard Tree); "Playing on a pattern/ Of pavement and leaves" (Grandfather on a Sunday); "If the leaves and playing children/ Did not make larger ripples" (Forever in August), "You tell me words/ Change colors like leaves" (With the Fading of Poets and Leaves), "And the rain that left/ The leaves of acacias/ Drooping on the Boulevard" (Distances), "It will leave me/ And I will be/ Alone" (Nightbird), "His touch is music,/ Copper like the late leaves" (Copper Like the Late Leaves), "Shadow by shadow/ Leaf by falling leaf" (Cicada), "Leaving the memory/ Of other roads/ In thinning petroleum/Rainbows," "No leaves fell/" (Understatement), among others.

Conflicting desire

But the pervasive paradox, or even pathos, of Guevara's poetry is her persona's dual desire for complete unity and total freedom. Most of her poems are attempts to articulate and reconcile these opposing tendencies for attachment and flight, the Apollo and the Daphne principles of a relationship, romantic or otherwise.

It therefore comes as no surprise that a good number of her poems gravitate around the image of trees, symbolizing what Thomas Moore describes in "Soul Mates" as "the upward yearning for simplicity, order, meaning and freedom, with the downward need for complexity, change, moodiness, rootedness and attachment."

Aside from "Boulevard Tree," "Distances," "The Last Rite," "Home," and "The Death of a Bar," where tree(s) somehow function as the focal trope, some of her poems surprisingly turn arboreal in the middle of nowhere: "Trees bristle in the wind" (Sacred Mountain); "Trilling/ The sound pulls the night/ From the sky/ Into a circle of trees" (Cicada); "Our laughter/ Disturbed the trees" (Ibaan-Descending), "The trees always leave an instant mix" (27), "Once/ There was a River/ Winding warm,/ And Trees./ And Trees" (Reincarnation).

In her introduction, Edith L. Tiempo, National Artist for Literature and poet-critic par excellance, aptly describes Guevara's poetry as "the consequence of slanted perceptions." And this critic cannot help but agree, for Guevara views the world from a most peculiar perspective, perceiving things in her own unique and oblique way(s). Abandonment, alienation, absence abound between the lines of her poetry, in the interstitial spaces between what she sees and what she says. For her self-fashioning as a poet often skewers her discernment of life, which is not necessarily bad, as long as she shares her many fresh insights to one and all: "The word åbsence would not/ Make sense" (27); "We have packed them all,/ Scrubbed the place clean/ Of memory" (In the Heart of Malate); "Everything will end/ Soon/ Like all love will" (End).

It's hoped that Guevara will soon reach her final destination wherever that may be, slowly realizing along her arduous passage that home is not a dwelling place, but a sacred state of indwelling.

Nerisa del Carmen Guevara's poems eddy around themes of loss

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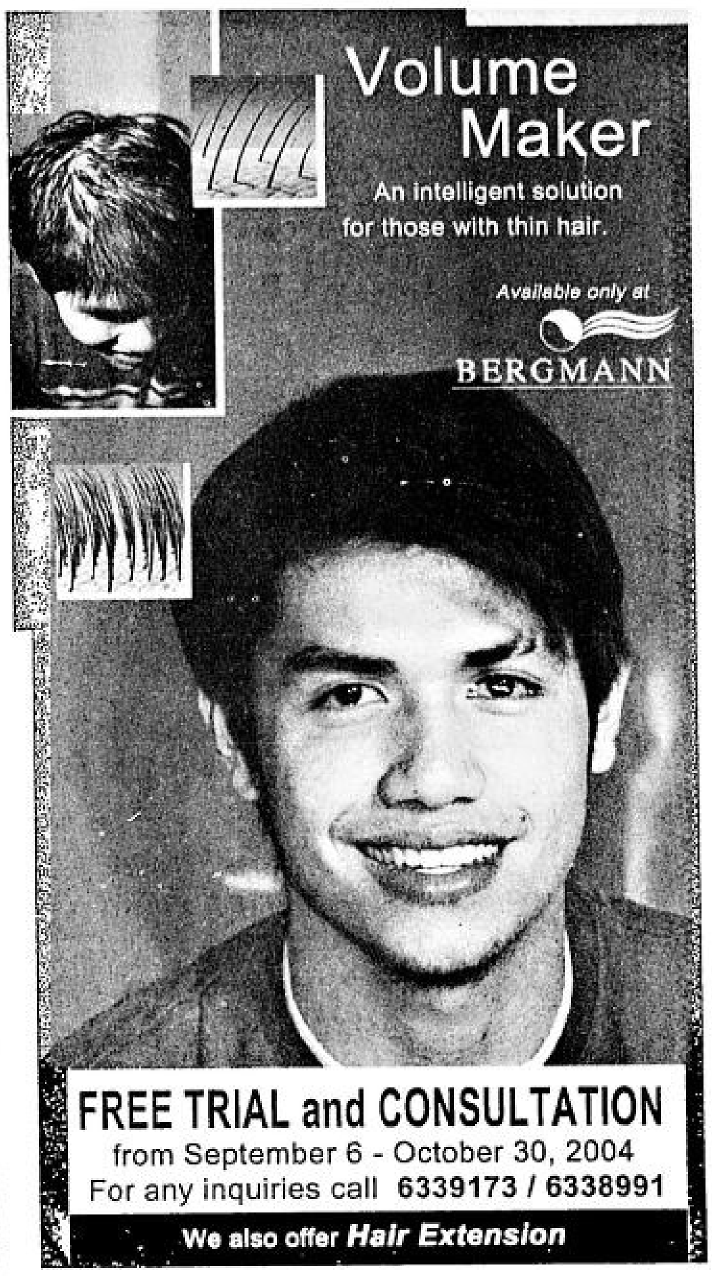

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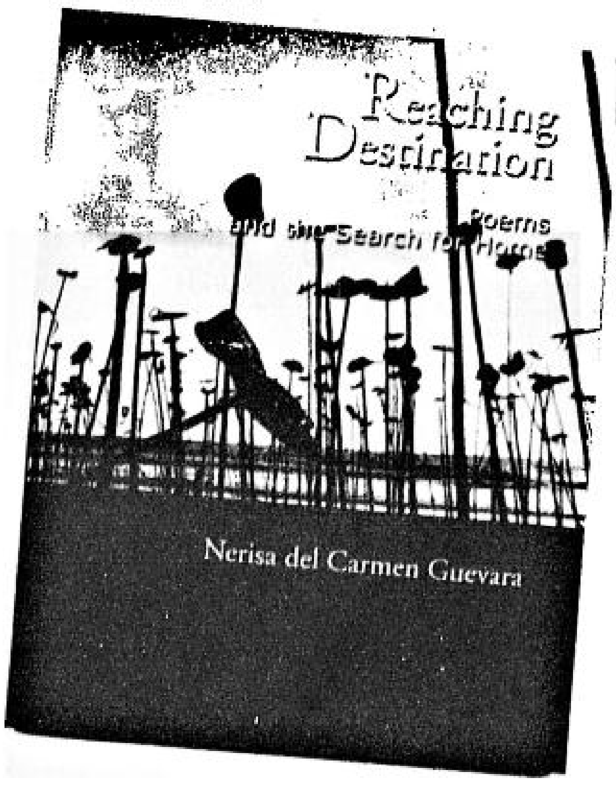
A poetess' perpetual quest for home

By Ralph Semino Galán
Contributor



NERISA del Carmen Guevara's "Reaching Destination: Poems and the Search for Home" (UST Publishing House, 2004, 131 pages) chronicles metaphorically her poetic persona's many meanderings in the perpetual quest for that holy grail called home.

This much-awaited, long-overdue first volume of verses, which took the poet 10 years in the making (1993-2003), has for its central metaphor the most fluid of the four basic elements: water in the shape of rain, river, tears, the sea. Arranged in reverse order, the 50 poems eddy around the subject of loss: lost loves, lost causes, lost moments, the loss of home.

For readers who are not too familiar with Guevara's poetry, it is highly recommended that they peruse the book from the back to the front to witness her development as a wordsmith, especially since "Reaching Destination" ends with an exegetic essay explaining her creative process. Read in this way, one becomes privy to her transformation from a timid, spare, almost haiku-like lyric poet to a more intrepid, profuse, ballad-oriented troubadour.

Her earlier pieces, like "Baguio Poem," "Garden Pond," "Nocturne," "Scars" and "Full Moon," are very Japanese in inspiration and execution. "Garden Pond" and "Nocturne," in particular, are written in tanka form, each poem consisting of five lines made up of five, seven, five, seven, and seven syllables. Like the typical tanka, the two poems manifest restraint, depending on concrete, puissant images to elicit an emotional response rather than employing abstractions to directly declare feelings and ideas: "A pale stalk standing/ Among the purple lilies,/ Drooping into a woman" (Garden Pond); "We walk scented by moonlight,/ Staring at the bracts of stars" (Nocturne).

Although not forged in the limiting structure of the five-seven-five syllables of the haiku, the three other verses still retain the flavor of Japanese poetry with its usual ingredients of exactitude, clarity and suggestiveness. In lieu of a kigo or seasonal word that denotes the time of the year being depicted, Guevara employs key images to evoke the time of the day, which is usually after dark: "And the night bleeds/ A green sadness" (Baguio Poem);

A POETESS'/ C3

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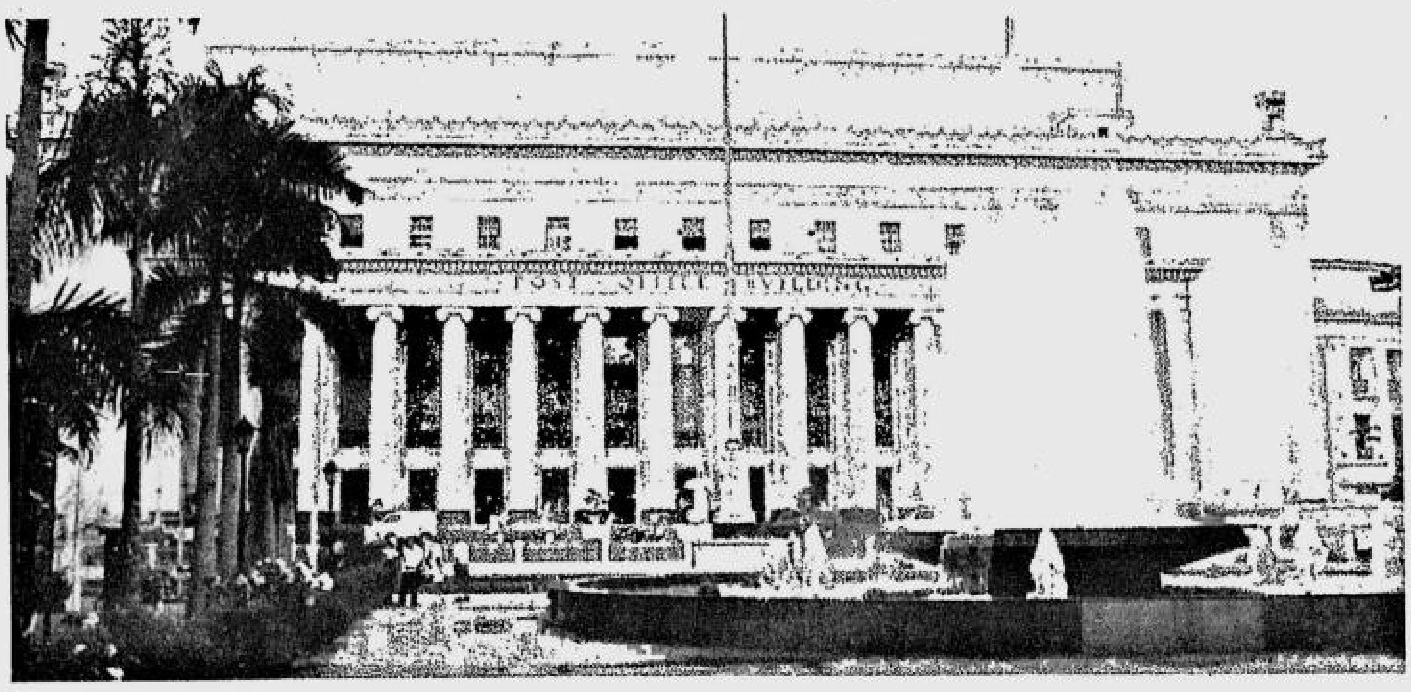
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Both the executive and legislative branches recognize the need to protect historical sites and structures, proven by laws enacted before to the Philippine ratification of the Unesco Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage in 1972. The government is now bound to adhere to the principles of the convention.

The range of heritage legislation includes the establishment of several commissions and administrative bodies empowered to protect heritage and legislation, prohibiting the destruction and export of national patrimony.

There is no single law that defines and protects the built heritage, which results in confusion, especially when heritage is threatened by destruction.

On the other hand, many laws regarding unrelated concerns such as indigenous peoples' issues, forestry preservation, urban-housing acts and others contain provisions that respect and protect historical sites and structures. These laws offer an unexpected window of protection for heritage.

Diverse national legislation concerns monuments, historical markers and plaques (Republic

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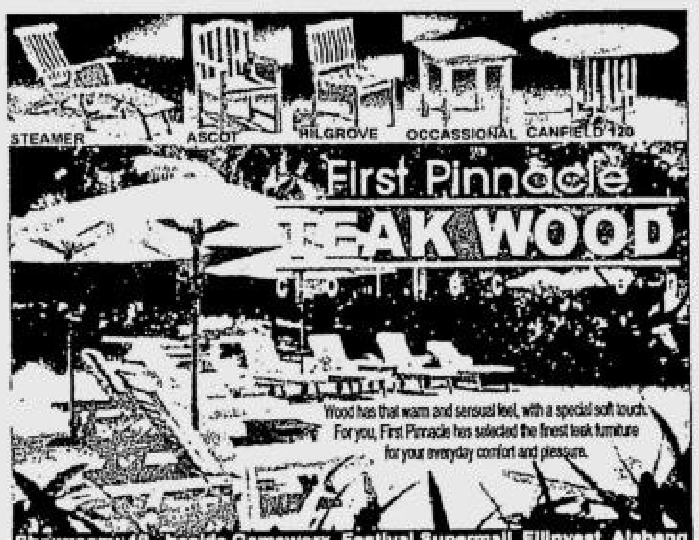

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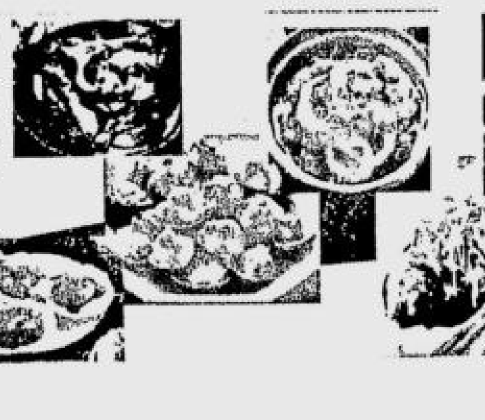

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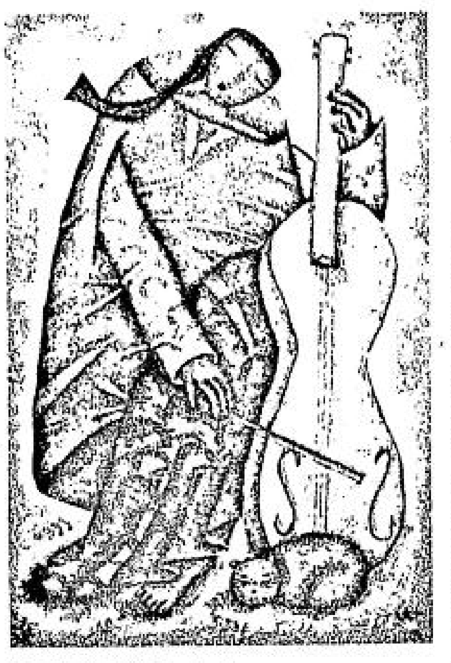
Jack Salud's dotted arias at 139



"DREAMER'S Poetry"

WISTFUL, tranquil, warm, intimate, animated, nostalgic, subtle, simple, lyrical—these come to mind as one steps back to savor Jack Salud's intricately executed masterpieces. Once more, the pointillist artist known for his rustic figures paints scenes of serenity and bliss, a balm for these times of turmoil.

"Dotted Arias" marks Salud's 14th one-man exhibit. It opens in Gallery 139, 3/L Glorietta 4, Ayala Center, on Oct. 12 and runs until Nov. 3.

Painstakingly executed with more than a million delicate dots of paint, the large-scale canvases show Salud's trademark energetic yet restful figures set amid a breezy background of cascading leaves: musicians caught up with their instruments, a mother humming a lullaby, etc.

Salud entered the art scene in 1996, when he was invited by Chichi Salas of Gallery Genesis to participate in the annual "Kulay sa Tubig" watercolor group exhibition.

In 1997, he opened his first solo at the Ayala Museum under Sonia Ner. Salud consequently received the prestigious commission to design two of the museum's Christmas cards that year.

In 1999, he opened his first international solo exhibit in Roppongi, Tokyo, through the invitation of the Department of Foreign Affairs.

In the words of art critic Cid Reyes, "Salud's art aches with such emotional feelings, but with a mixture of understated elegance and a surfeit of ornamentalism. But it is the Oriental sentiment that so pervades the mood of his works—a tranquilizing peace that envelops every figure in his domestic landscapes."

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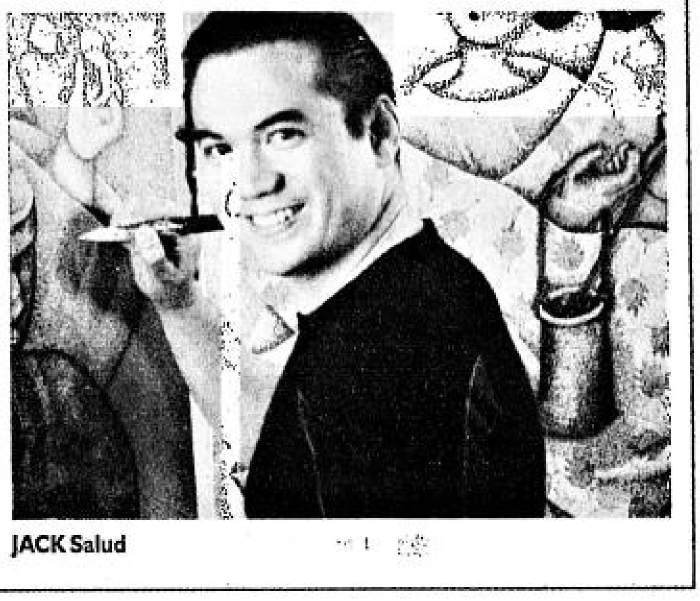


JACK Salud

Torn between two loves

By Pablo A. Tariman
Contributor

Pop and classical are inseparable parts of his music and he is not ready to abandon one for the other

RYAN CAYABYAB

FACING the media to promote his Oct. 15-16 concerts at the Cultural Center of the Philippines marking his 50th birthday, Ryan Cayabyab confided a musical predicament.

He said pop and classical were inseparable parts of his music education and he was not ready to abandon one for the other. "Fact is, the pop music industry sometimes finds me too classical for pop and people in the classical turf finds me too pop for classical."

Very few know that Cayabyab was the son of a first-rate operatic diva of the '40s and '50s, Celerina Pujante, and that from 4-14, he was into Bach and Beethoven before he discovered Bacharach.

At age 4, his mother taught him the Spanish song, "Me Gustan Todas." That is all he remembered of his mother, who died when he was only 6.

Great Filipino artists like maestra Mercedes Santiago and maestro Lucio San Pedro, even Levi Celerio, said Cayabyab's mother had one of the great voices in an earlier era.

It is easy to see why Cayabyab can't abandon classical for pop and vice versa. He loves both and gets different rewards from each.

Classical music nourishes his spirit but pop music provides for his material needs. He said one could buy flashy cars and beautiful houses simply by composing jingles, but he opted for the "bigger stuff."

Cayabyab said, "Actually the issue is not about survival. It's about what you want to do. I've always believed that when you give your best, be it classical or pop, things will work for you."

A case in point is his Missa 2000, which won the Onassis International Cultural Competitions about two years ago.

Heard in a live concert, there is no doubt the piece is a superior work. On CD, Missa 2000 remains a ravishing work, with unique vocal inputs from soloists Teresa Fajardo ("Kyrie"), Edward Granadosin ("Gloria") and Grace Nono ("Credo").

Obviously this is a piece of work that needs musicians who suit the music, not the other way around.

The soloists are not the kind that will attract extraordinary attention. But in Cayabyab's Missa 2000, their vocal prowess is perfectly suited to the piece that they seem born to essay the parts.

Take the soloist Grace Nono, for instance. Her voice will never fit in a Mozart or Verdi Mass. In Cayabyab's piece, however, she unleashes a rare kind of vocal power so uniquely overpowering in its distillation.

Apart from its well-chosen soloists, Missa 2000 also showcases the musical precision of conductor Julian Quirit, who gives the piece distinction and authority.

The San Miguel Chorale under Jonathan Velasco is another big plus of this recording. The choir has élan: The voices merge with consummate artistry.

Love songs

If Cayabyab shows his best as a classical musician in Missa 2000, one gets a taste of his pop side as musical arranger in the other San Miguel Philharmonic recording, "Great Filipino Love Songs."

From the outset, one can see that he has given those time-worn love songs a contemporary feel.

The San Miguel Philharmonic, under Arnel Feliciano, has changed musical gears and turned to native romantic melodies—from Mike Velarde's "Dahil sa Iyo" and "Buhat" to Restie Umali's "Saan Ka Man Naroroon" and Ernani Cuenco's "Gaano Kita Kamahal."

Recorded at the San Miguel Philharmonic rehearsal hall, the orchestra sounded muffled in some parts and unbalanced. (This was a big contrast to Missa 2000 recorded at the PhilAmlife Theater, which has excellent acoustics.)

Even with this minor observation, "Great Filipino Love Songs" as arranged by Cayabyab deserves to be a bestseller. The entries are well-chosen and prove that Filipinos are incurably romantic—even musically.

Russian violinist

If music lovers are frustrated that there is no single aria or a violin or piano concerto in the current season of the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra (dominated by contemporary pieces for violin, cello and voice), take a good musical break in the second season concert of the Manila Philharmonic under Rodel Colmenar.

Russian violinist Anastacia Chebotareva is back in Manila and will be soloist in the Tchaikovsky D Major Concerto on Oct. 22 at the PhilAm-life Theater. Call 7051728.

You will have a chance to see the works of our National Artist for Dance Leonor Orosa Goquingco called "Saludo" on Feb. 10 at the Francisco Santiago Hall.

Featured performers are Dance Concert Company, the College of St. Benilde-Filipinescas Dance Company and the Vella Damian School of Ballet. Call 8784358 to 59.

Classically trained

That classical training helps pop artists was confirmed by jazz and pop diva Angela Bofill, who was in top shape at age 50 as she performed to an SRO crowd at Merk's Bar Bistro on its second anniversary recently.

Bofill said her favorite opera was actually Gershwin's "Porgy and Bess" and her voice lessons at the Manhattan School of Music helped her develop her own style.

"If I did not acquire the technique I learned as a classical singer, I would have been gone as a singer years ago," she said.

Do we have the legal . . .

From page D1

Act 841 and Presidential Decree 260), old buildings, shrines, landmarks and historic sites (RA 4846 and Presidential Decree 260); military and battle memorials (Presidential Decree 1076), edifices (Presidential Decree 1505), and immovable properties (Republic Act 8492).

To be protected by national legislation, the object or site must have national significance. A collection of laws defines significance as something that perpetuates the memory of a person or event (RA 841); having cultural, historical anthropological or scientific value (RA 4846); site of birth, imprisonment, death, of great and eminent leaders of the nation (Presidential Decree 105); having played an important role in the "development of the nation" (Proclamation 1266).

Difficult

Architectural heritage is significant to the nation because of its artistic excellence, which, however, it is not considered a criterion for "national significance" by any law. That is why it is difficult to preserve diverse examples of architectural heritage such as the Manila Post Office, Tomás Mapúa house in Pasay, Gota de Leche building in Manila and so many other pieces of significant architecture.

RA 4846 is of special significance since it seeks protection and preservation of cultural properties which include "old buildings, monuments, shrines, documents and objects that may be classified as antiques, relics or artifacts, landmarks, anthropological and historical sites, and specimens of natural history that are of cultural, historical, anthropological or scientific value and significance to the nation."

The most significant of these objects are classified as National Cultural Treasures. Other worthy properties that have a lesser historical and cultural significance are classified as Important Cultural Properties.

The different government agencies that protect heritage are:

- District or city engineers, who are charged with "reconstruction, maintenance, cleaning and protection of monuments within their jurisdiction."
- The Department of National Defense, which has responsibility over military and battle monuments.
- The Intramuros Administration, mandated by Presidential Decree 1616, which administers the development and reconstruction of Manila's fortified Spanish colonial center considered a major Philippine landmark.
- The National Historical Institute which identifies, designates and marks historic places and has the responsibility of their maintenance, including construction and reconstruction of monuments in their care.

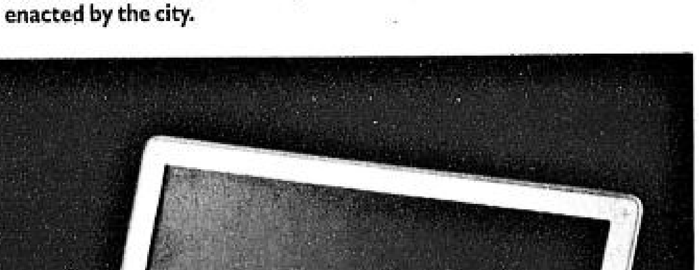
National Museum

- The National Museum, which takes charge of the "restoration, reconstruction and preservation of government historical buildings, shrines, landmarks, monuments and sites" listed under the National Cultural Treasures or Important Cultural Treasures programs; it also must provide archaeological clearance before any construction is done on any Archaeological Zone.
- The National Commission for Culture and the Arts, which administers government funds for culture and the arts, and whose board consists of four private-sector representatives and heads of cultural agencies (National Museum, National Historical Institute, National Library, National Archives, National Language Institute, Department of Education, Department of Tourism). It exercises administrative supervision over the National Historical Institute and National Museum and coordinates their policies and programs. It is also authorized to preserve all aspects and forms of tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

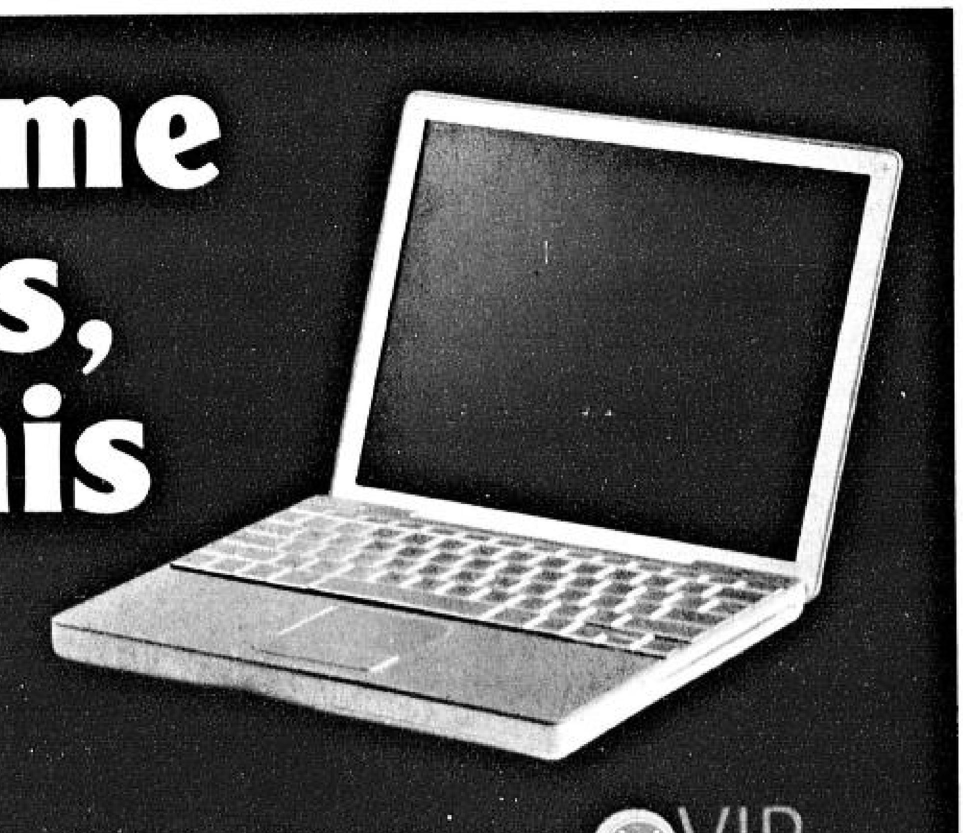
Other government agencies overlap in the mandate to protect heritage, particularly archaeological sites, historical sites and structures, although heritage protection is not the agency's major function.

- The National Commission on Indigenous People empowers cultural communities or indigenous people to preserve and manage their artifacts, archaeological and historical sites, allowing them to receive national funds for preservation and management of their heritage sites.

E-mail the author at afvillalon@hotmail.com



FURTHER destruction of the abandoned train station in San Fernando, Pampanga, is now prohibited by protective legislation enacted by the city.



If you have time on your hands, you'll have this on your lap.

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Hands On Manila is inviting you to auction off your free time in exchange for gadgets and gizmos on Volunteer In Person Day, October 24, 2004, Sunday, NBC Tent at the Fort, from 9 am to 8 pm. Auction starts at 12 noon.

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ADVERTORIAL

Eating healthy despite a busy lifestyle

Nowadays, eating a complete, balanced meal can be a challenge. Constantly beating deadlines and a hectic schedule can make busy people ignore the importance of nutrition. Eating becomes simply a hurried task of grabbing a bite to calm hunger pangs. When frequently done, this unhealthy practice can become a habit that puts you at risk of undernutrition. However, eating healthy need not be tough and time-consuming. Simple, nutritious meals are still possible despite a busy lifestyle.

What does eating healthy mean?

Eating healthy means choosing food that provides all the nutrients needed by your body to function at its best.[1] Nutrients supply energy for work and physical activities, regulate body processes and provide materials for growth and tissue repair.[2]

What are the nutrients needed by the body?

The body needs **macronutrients** (proteins, carbohydrates, fats and water) and **micronutrients** (vitamins and minerals).[1] The body also needs **fiber**, which gives protection against diseases (cancer, constipation and cardiovascular disease) and **antioxidants** that prevent cell damage caused by free radicals (cancer, cataract and atherosclerosis).

A busy lifestyle need not put you at risk of undernutrition. Meal supplementation can be a healthy eating alternative.

How can you get all these nutrients?

A healthy, well-balanced diet is the key to complete nutrition.[2] **Starches and grains** should be the foundation of your diet. These provide carbohydrates as well as some fiber, protein, vitamins and minerals. **Vegetables and fruits** are good sources of vitamins, minerals and fiber, while **protein-rich foods** should be taken in moderate amounts. **Fat and sugar** provide energy but should be taken less in the diet.

What happens when you do not eat enough to meet your nutritional needs?

You may suffer from **malnutrition** that can be in the form of undernutrition.[3] **Undernutrition** usually results from inadequate dietary intake. This may manifest as fatigue, dizziness, weight loss and susceptibility to infection.[4]

How can you meet your nutritional needs if you do not have time for a healthy, well-balanced meal?

A meal supplement like Nutren® Optimum offers a complete nutrition in a jiffy. A glass of Nutren® Optimum provides all the carbohydrates, proteins and fat that you need for the day. It contains more whey protein than milk and provides a healthy source of fat that does not contribute to bad cholesterol in the body. Moreover, it has all the vitamins and minerals that help regulate body processes.

What are the other benefits of a meal supplement?

It is easy to prepare. Just add it to water for a nutritionally complete, delicious drink. It does not only calm hunger pangs but also offers complete nutrition to make you feel stronger everyday.

Is taking a meal supplement equivalent to eating healthy?

Definitely. Taking a meal supplement like **Nutren® Optimum** is the next best alternative to a complete, balanced meal for those busy days when you do not have time to eat healthy.

References

1 Healthy eating. Palo Alto Medical Foundation Web site. Available at: www.pamf.org/health/healthinfo/index.cfm?page=article&sec_id=4&gml_id= nutri. Accessed September 28, 2004. 2 Nutritional guidelines for Filipinos. Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI) Web site. Available at: www.fnri.dost.gov.ph/ngfiles/ng1.htm. Accessed September 29, 2004. 3 Nutritional disorders. The Merck Manual of Diagnosis and Therapy. Available at www.merck.com/mrkshared/mmanual/section1/chapter2/2a.jsp. Accessed September 30, 2004. 4 Malnutrition. Medical Encyclopedia. Available at: www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus. Accessed September 21, 2004.

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[1] Walzem, R.L., C.J. Dillard, and J.B. German. Crit. Rev. Food & Sci & Nutr. 42:353, 2002. [2] [illegible] A. Cancer Res 1994;54(5):1969-1975.

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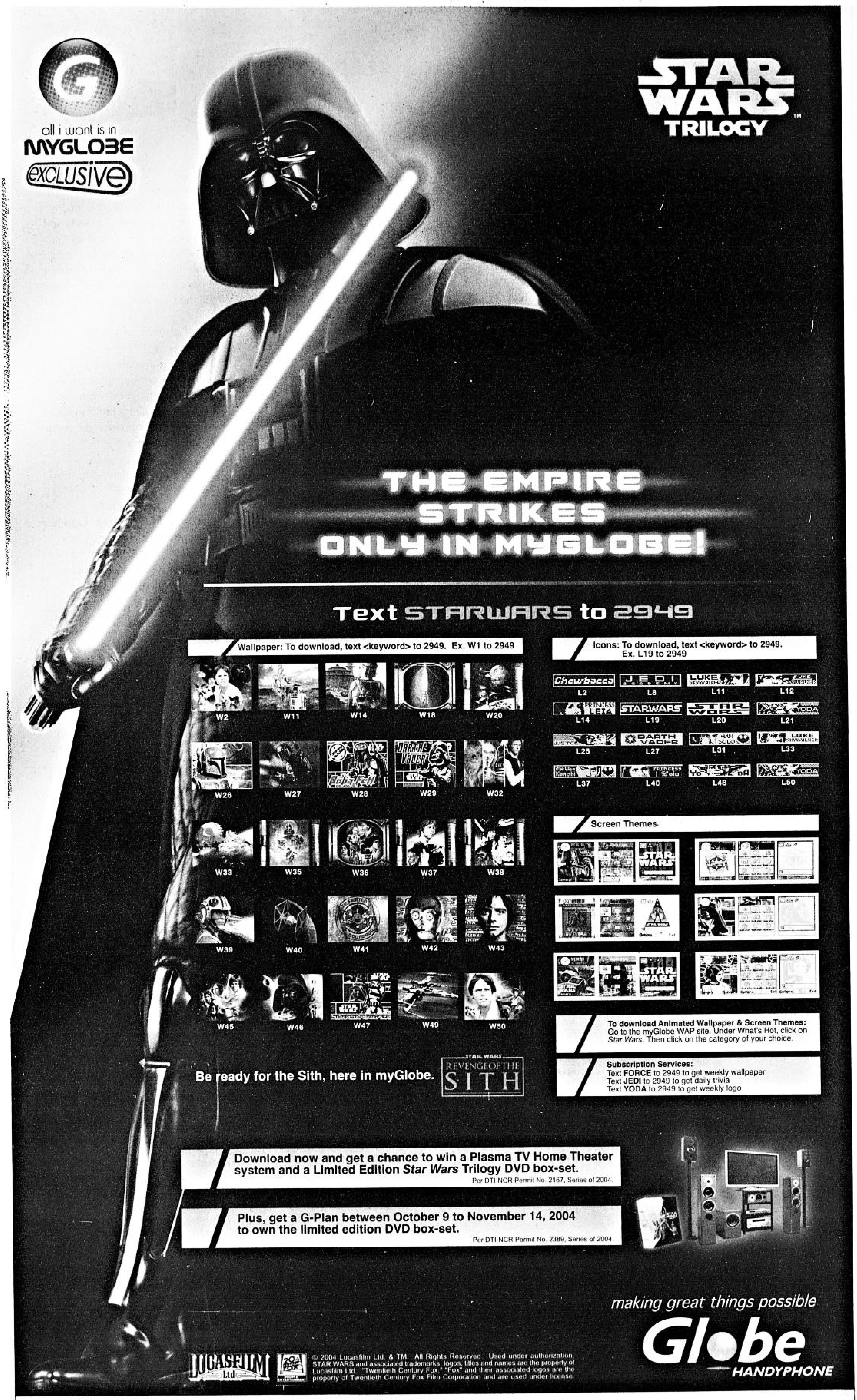

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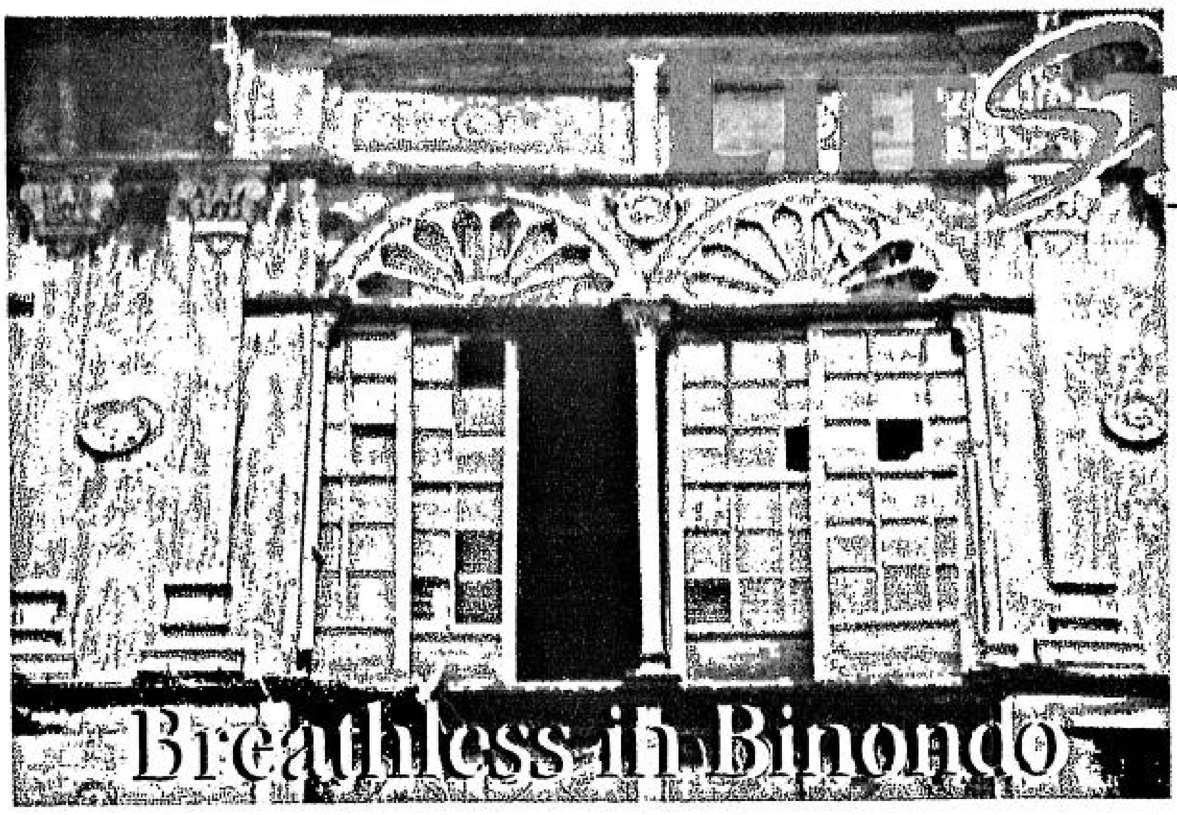

Breathless in Binondo

DETAIL of windows from house in San Nicolas

ALL4ART

Bea Zobel Jr.

BEAUTY truly lies in the eyes of the beholder. When I think of Binondo, I think of decaying buildings and cold contemporary office blocks.

I wouldn't have seen the beauty of Binondo if it weren't for the fact that I was toured by a friend who loves the district. What treasures it has that are waiting for anyone who will take the time to look carefully!

Being close to the ports, Binondo has always been an important commercial district. Many of the city's most fashionable shops were found here.

Nineteenth-century travel writers mentioned its wide streets busy with commerce as well as the elegant establishments and mansions of the wealthy. To quote Augusto Villalon:

"It thrived during the Spanish colonial years… when it traded in… silks, Persian rugs, ivory, *ilang-ilang* essence, spices and other Oriental treasures…"

Today, Binondo is known as Manila's Chinatown.

We began our rounds at the foot of Jones Bridge, where Escolta street begins. Before it was replaced by Makati, Escolta was Manila's shopping emporium. First stop was Capitol Theatre. Its Art Deco ornamentation is marvelous. There is a relief carving of two women in ternos each holding a symbol of the theater. The façade also features a geometric grill. The whole theater is an example of traditional Filipino imagery meeting the modern.

Next we visited the museum at the Calvo Building, now being run by the Teoticos who are the descendants of the original owners. This is a little jewel of a museum. It features old newspapers and advertisements, bottles and photographs.

There was an 1899 newspaper showing that even then, Rizal was already regarded a hero and martyr.

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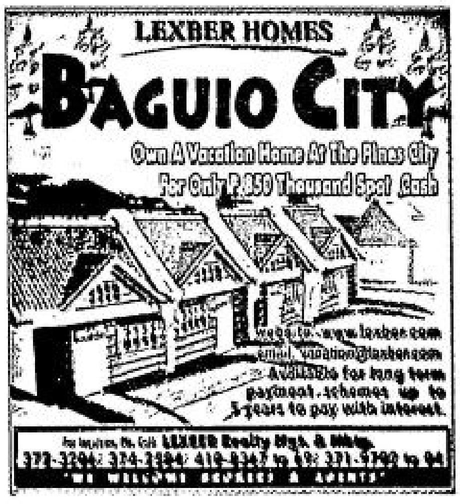

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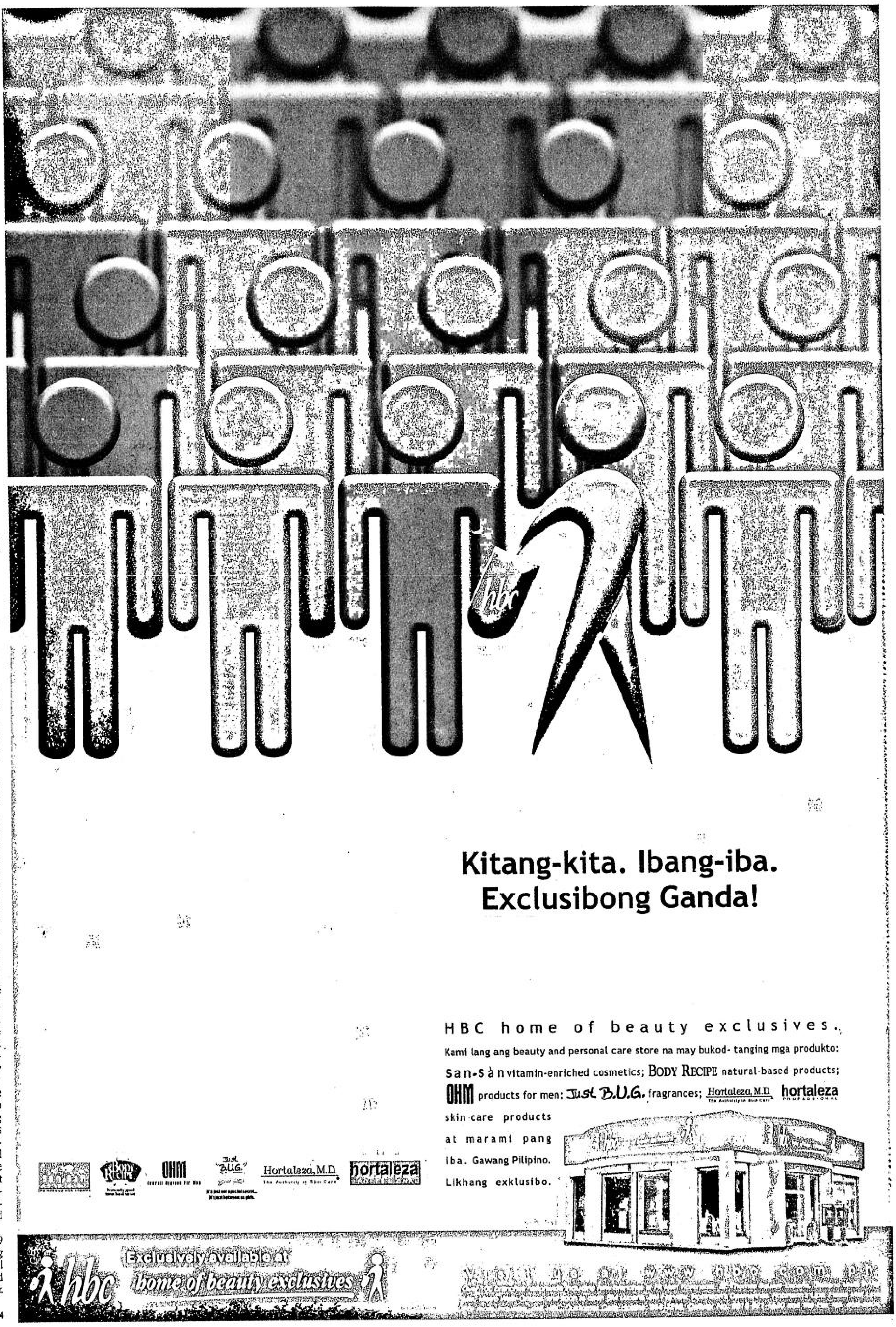

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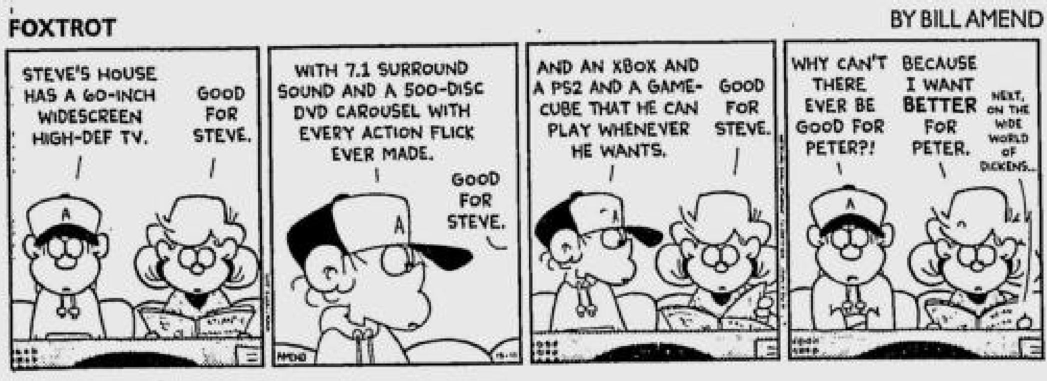
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND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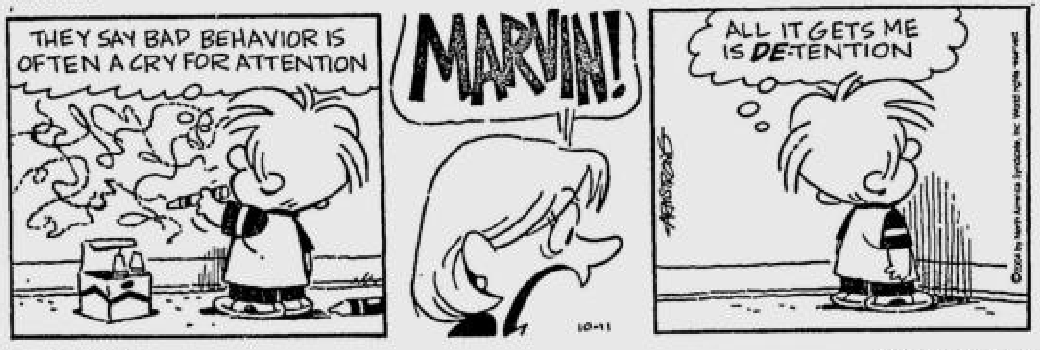
AND AN XBOX AND A PS2 AND A GAMECUBE THAT HE CAN PLAY WHENEVER HE WANTS.
GOOD FOR STEVE.
WHY CAN'T THERE EVER BE GOOD FOR PETER?!
BECAUSE I WANT BETTER FOR PETER.
NEXT, ON THE WIDE WORLD OF DICKENS...

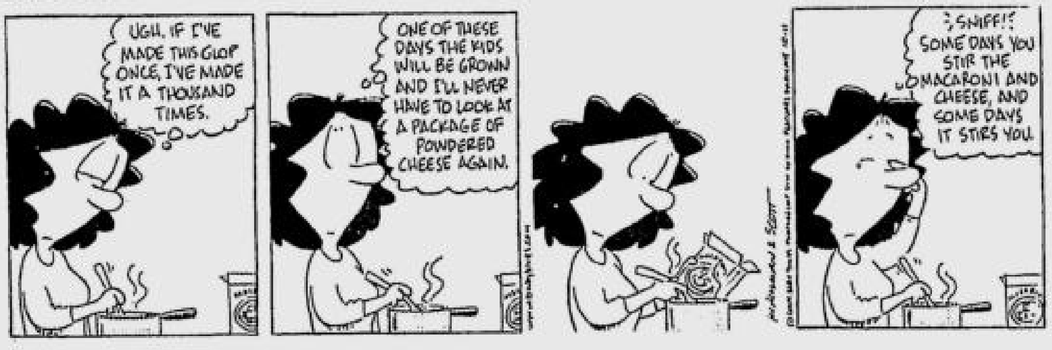
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


THEY SAY BAD BEHAVIOR IS OFTEN A CRY FOR ATTENTION
MARVIN!
ALL IT GETS ME IS DE-TENTION
10-11

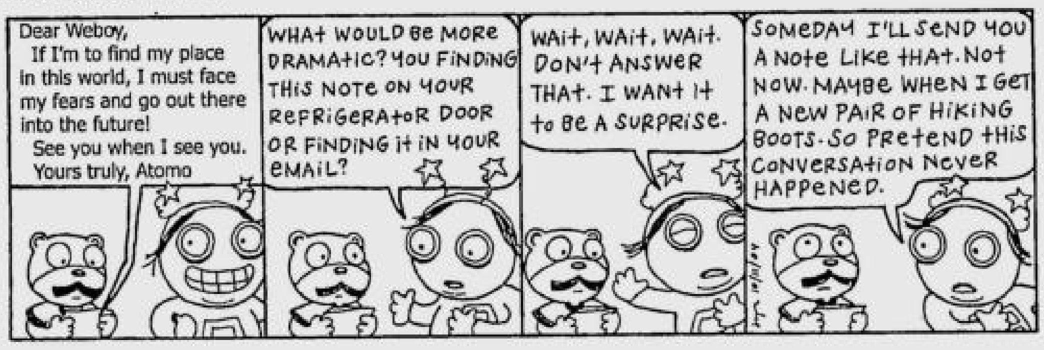
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


UGH. IF I'VE MADE THIS GLOP ONCE, I'VE MADE IT A THOUSAND TIMES.
ONE OF THESE DAYS THE KIDS WILL BE GROWN AND I'LL NEVER HAVE TO LOOK AT A PACKAGE OF POWDERED CHEESE AGAIN.
SNIFF!
SOME DAYS YOU STIR THE MACARONI AND CHEESE, AND SOME DAYS IT STIRS YOU.

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Dear Weboy,
If I'm to find my place in this world, I must face my fears and go out there into the future!
See you when I see you.
Yours truly, Atomo
WHAT WOULD BE MORE DRAMATIC? YOU FINDING THIS NOTE ON YOUR REFRIGERATOR DOOR OR FINDING IT IN YOUR EMAIL?
WAIT, WAIT, WAIT. DON'T ANSWER THAT. I WANT IT TO BE A SURPRISE.
SOMEDAY I'LL SEND YOU A NOTE LIKE THAT. NOT NOW. MAYBE WHEN I GET A NEW PAIR OF HIKING BOOTS. SO PRETEND THIS CONVERSATION NEVER HAPPENED.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have a vivid imagination, and strong opinions about society and social structures. You have a charming personality, but you mean business when you're working. You especially have a talent for finding simple solutions to problems. Many things are winding up this year. Let go so that you can create room for new things to enter.

Birthdate of: Jane Krakowski, actress; Eleanor Roosevelt, US first lady; Henry Heinz, business founder.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Many of you are confronting hidden aspects of yourselves. Uranus is traveling through your 12th House. You'll become more aware of who you really are.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You might feel increasing pressure from a group now. Perhaps others want you to be something that you're not. It's important for you to stand your ground.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You feel that your boss is increasingly repressive. You can see that "last straw" slowly approaching. Don't do anything rash until you're ready for the fallout.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Many of you have wonderful opportunities to expand your awareness of life and the world around you. New religions, philosophies and ideas appeal to you now.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Many of you will encounter unusual, passionate relationships this year! They'll definitely be the stuff of movies. Consider it great material for your diary, if you have time to keep one.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Those of you who have fallen into static, frozen relationships will encounter a few surprises in the next year or two. Uranus is going to shake things up.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You will soon find that you have a new attitude toward your job. Alternatively, many of you will change jobs in the next few years.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You can expect some surprises coming your way through your children (if you're a parent). If you're single, you can expect some surprising and unusual love affairs.

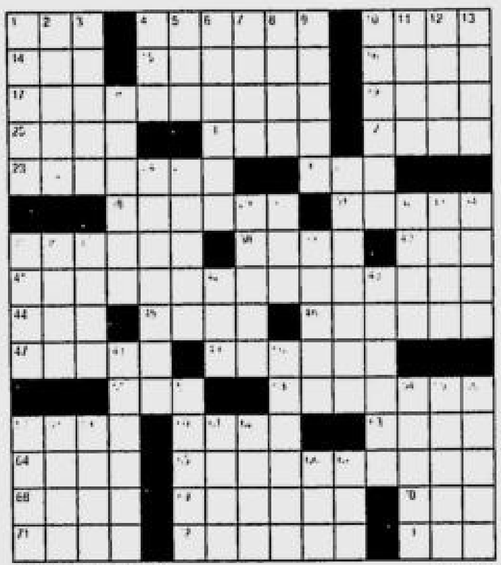
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Old ties with the past will likely be broken now and in the next few years. You will re-establish new roots in the future, but you will never let anyone dominate you again.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Increasingly, you will notice that in the next year, your everyday world becomes more exciting and full of wonder. It's great to be learning new ideas and meeting new people!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Changes to your job and your source of income are likely in the next few years. Don't worry; these changes will ultimately be for the better.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): In the next few years, your drive for freedom will increase. You will not tolerate any kind of repression or restriction in your life. Your need for independence is growing!

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Norma Steinberg
San Francisco, CA

10/11/04

ACROSS
1 Take measures
4 John Ritter sitcom, "__ Company"
10 "Rich Man, Poor Man" author Irwin
14 King of France
15 Don't leave me behind!
16 Fabled loser
17 Enough at the bar?
19 Charity
20 Locale
21 Prepare for sowing
22 Gusto
23 Rolled pastry
26 __ Na Na
28 Disclose
31 Portents
35 Tribute
38 Ransack
40 Dairy farm sound
41 Wit at the bar?
44 Decade count
45 Tend to the soup
46 Lessee
47 Plus feature
49 Small river
51 Sorta
53 Without time notation
57 Barbed spear
60 Latin 101 verb
63 Identical
64 You wish!
65 Actor at the bar?
68 Tick off
69 One-celled organism
70 Cavity
71 Dancing gala
72 Removed suds from
73 Capone and Pacino

DOWN
1 Gertrude's tapestry
2 Woo
3 Cook's clock
4 Gemini count
5 Embodies
6 Mini-wave
7 Etc.'s cousin
8 Continental dough
9 Gushes
10 Magic word
11 In good health
12 Weaponry
13 Left on a map
18 Zodiac sign
24 Finds disgusting
25 Happening
27 Impetuous person
29 Warn
30 Scot's toilet
32 Poet Lazarus
33 Lunchtime
34 Classify
35 Miss in Sp.
36 Affirmative votes
37 Part of the eye
39 Frequently
42 Bro's sibling
43 See past the disguise
48 French tower
50 Hurries
52 Horrible cartoon character
54 Buccaneers' home
55 Post sans postage
56 Concavities
57 Clothing
58 Largest of seven
59 Occupy completely
61 "La Boheme" role
62 Unk. author
66 Justice Fortas
67 Scoundrel

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

C	L	U	B	S	O	D	A	■	T	E	R	R	O	R
R	E	L	I	E	V	E	D	■	E	L	A	I	N	E
A	N	A	G	R	A	M	S	■	L	E	S	S	E	N
T	O	N	S	I	L	S	■	T	E	M	P	E	S	T
■	■	■	P	E	S	■	L	A	V	E	■	■	■	■
F	A	T	E	S	■	B	E	R	I	N	G	S	E	A
R	U	I	N	■	B	R	A	S	S	T	A	C	K	S
E	G	A	D	■	E	E	R	I	E	■	S	R	I	S
T	H	R	E	A	T	E	N	E	D	■	T	E	N	T
S	T	A	R	G	A	Z	E	R	■	D	R	E	G	S
■	■	■	■	I	T	E	R	■	J	O	G	■	■	■
P	I	R	A	T	E	S	■	T	O	R	N	A	D	O
A	D	I	D	A	S	■	F	O	G	S	O	V	E	R
A	L	C	O	T	T	■	A	R	M	A	M	E	N	T
R	E	E	S	E	S	■	A	N	A	L	Y	S	T	S

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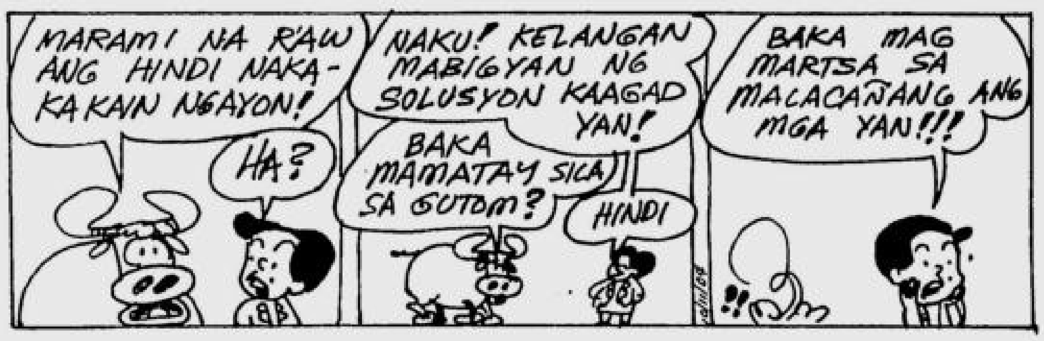
10/11/04

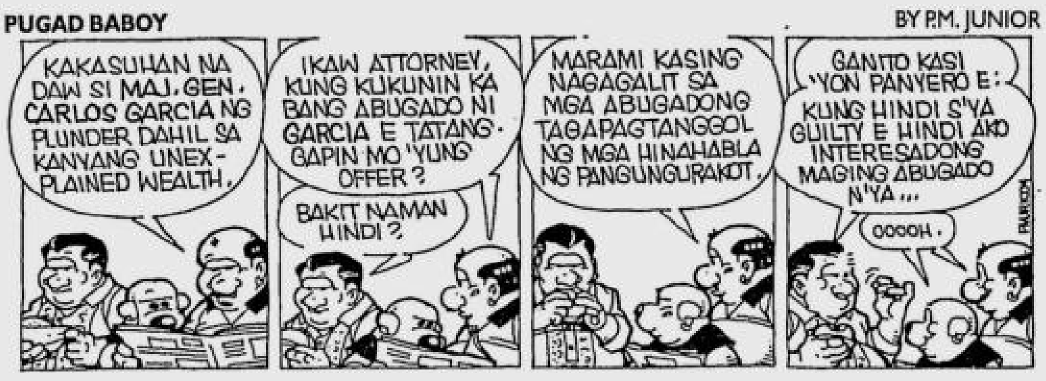
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


MARAMI NA RAW ANG HINDI NAKAKAKAIN NGAYON!
HA?
NAKU! KELANGAN MABIGYAN NG SOLUSYON KAAGAD YAN!
BAKA MAMATAY SILA SA GUTOM?
HINDI
BAKA MAG MARTSA SA MALACAÑANG ANG MGA YAN!!!

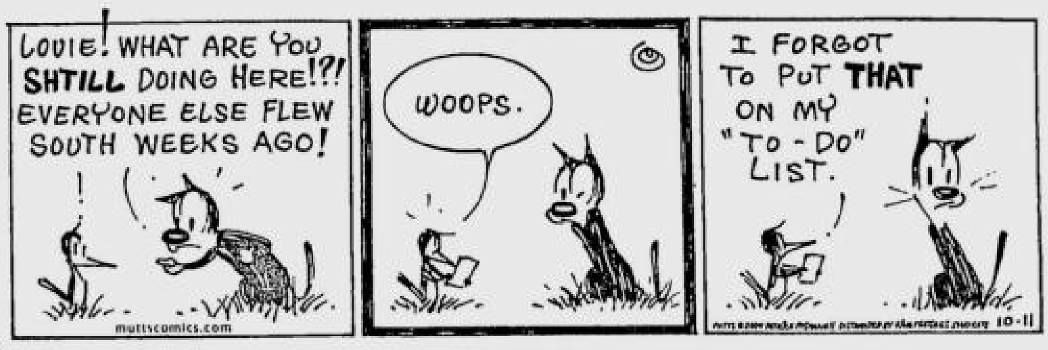
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


KAKASUHAN NA DAW SI MAJ. GEN. CARLOS GARCIA NG PLUNDER DAHIL SA KANYANG UNEXPLAINED WEALTH.
IKAW ATTORNEY, KUNG KUKUNIN KA BANG ABUGADO NI GARCIA E TATANGGAPIN MO 'YUNG OFFER?
BAKIT NAMAN HINDI?
MARAMI KASING NAGAGALIT SA MGA ABUGADONG TAGAPAGTANGGOL NG MGA HINAHABLA NG PANGUNGURAKOT.
GANITO KASI 'YON PANYERO E: KUNG HINDI S'YA GUILTY E HINDI AKO INTERESADONG MAGING ABUGADO N'YA...
OOOOH.

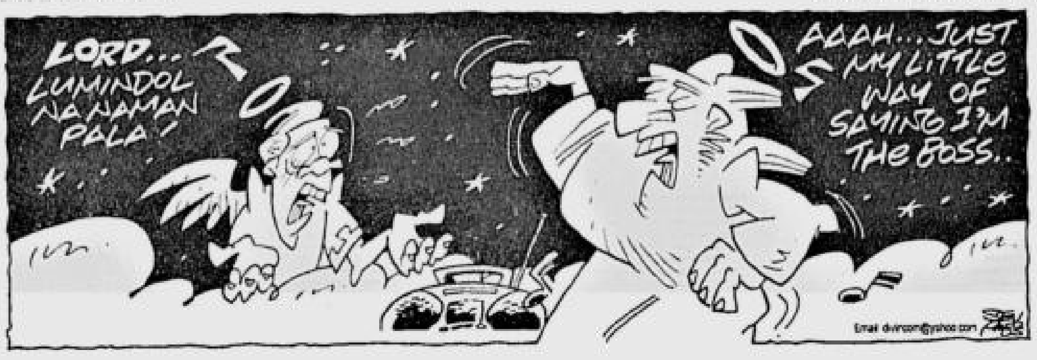
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


LOUIE! WHAT ARE YOU SHTILL DOING HERE!?! EVERYONE ELSE FLEW SOUTH WEEKS AGO!
WOOPS.
I FORGOT TO PUT THAT ON MY "TO-DO" LIST.
muttscomics.com
10-11

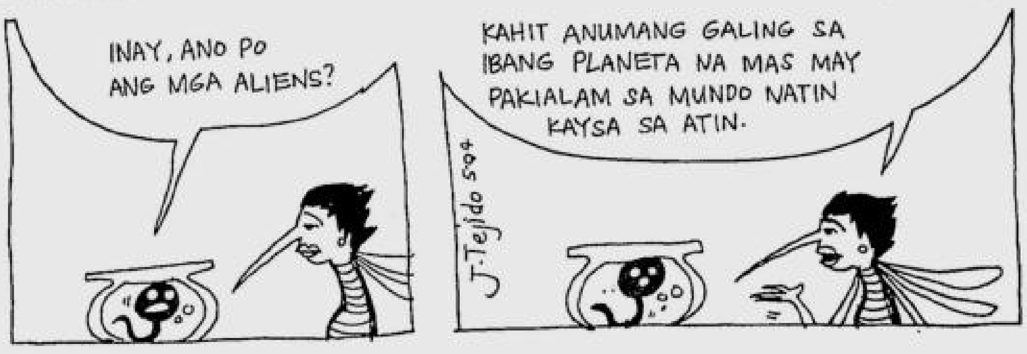
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


LORD... LUMINDOL NA NAMAN PALA!
AAAH... JUST MY LITTLE WAY OF SAYING I'M THE BOSS..
Email divincom@yahoo.com

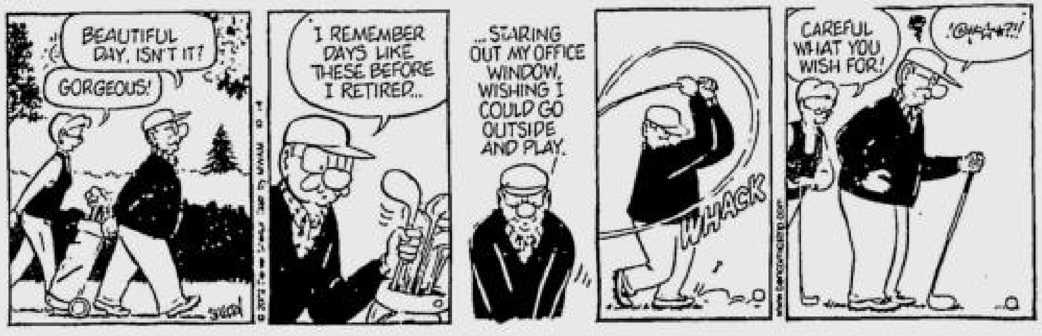
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


INAY, ANO PO ANG MGA ALIENS?
KAHIT ANUMANG GALING SA IBANG PLANETA NA MAS MAY PAKIALAM SA MUNDO NATIN KAYSA SA ATIN.
J. Tejido 504

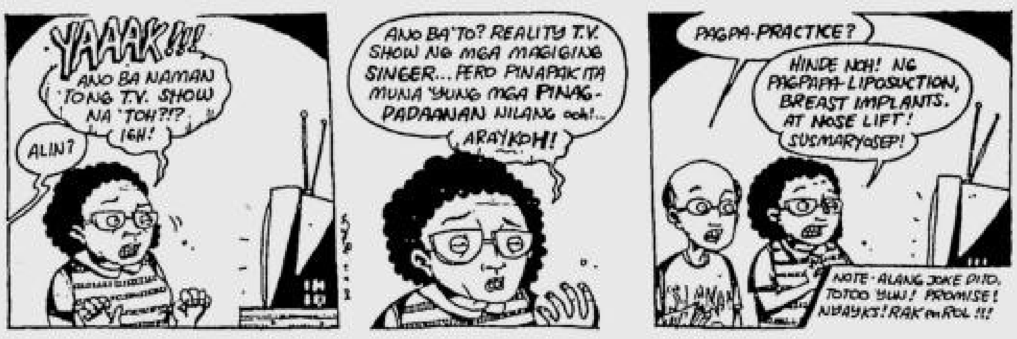
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


BEAUTIFUL DAY, ISN'T IT?
GORGEOUS!
I REMEMBER DAYS LIKE THESE BEFORE I RETIRED...
...STARING OUT MY OFFICE WINDOW, WISHING I COULD GO OUTSIDE AND PLAY.
WHACK
CAREFUL WHAT YOU WISH FOR!
!@#*?!

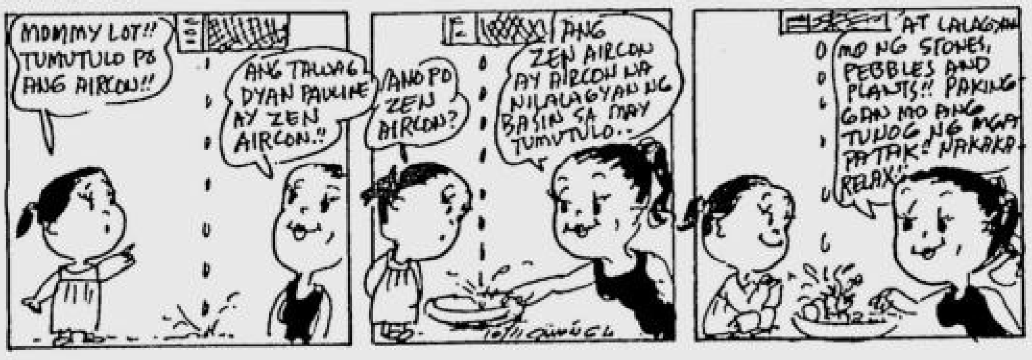
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


YAAAK!!!
ANO BA NAMAN 'TONG T.V. SHOW NA 'TOH?!? IGH!
ALIN?
ANO BA'TO? REALITY T.V. SHOW NG MGA MAGIGING SINGER... PERO PINAPAKITA MUNA 'YUNG MGA PINAGPADAANAN NILANG ooh!...
ARAYKOH!
PAGPA-PRACTICE?
HINDE NOH! NG PAGPAPA-LIPOSUCTION, BREAST IMPLANTS, AT NOSE LIFT! SUSMARYOSEP!
NOTE: ALANG JOKE DITO. TOTOO 'YUN! PROMISE! NWAYKS! RAK en ROL!!!

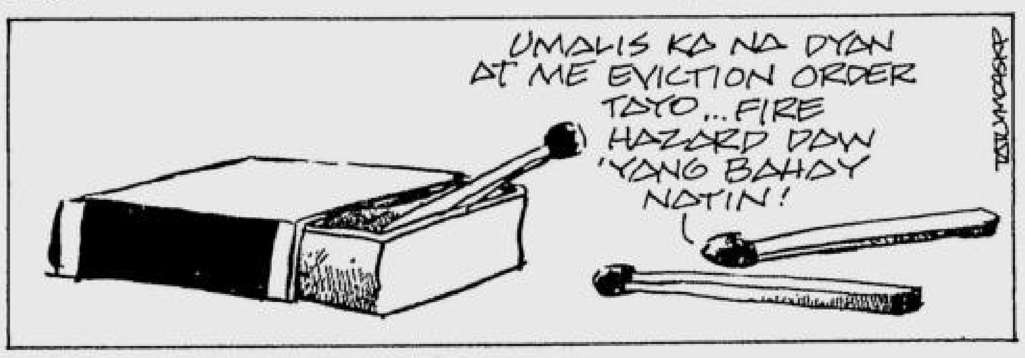
LOVEKNOTS

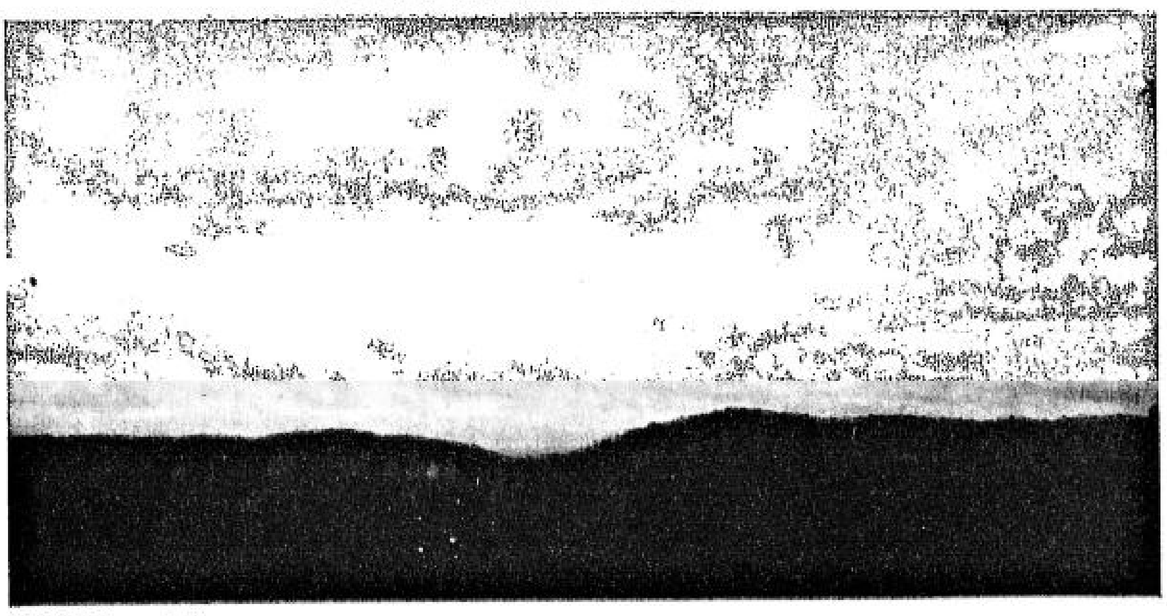
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


MOMMY LOT!! TUMUTULO PO ANG AIRCON!!
ANG TAWAG DYAN PAULINE AY ZEN AIRCON.!!
ANO PO ZEN AIRCON?
ANG ZEN AIRCON AY AIRCON NA NILALAGYAN NG BASIN SA MAY TUMUTULO..
AT LALAGYAN MO NG STONES, PEBBLES AND PLANTS!! PAKINGGAN MO ANG TUNOG NG MGA PATAK! NAKAKARELAX!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


UMALIS KA NA DYAN AT ME EVICTION ORDER TAYO... FIRE HAZARD DAW 'YONG BAHAY NATIN!



"BLUE Mountains"

solitude
isa lorenzo 2004

"SOLITUDE"

Isa Lorenzo photo exhibit to benefit cancer group

SILVER Lens at Pacific Plaza Towers at The Fort has mounted "Healing Spaces," a collection of black-and-white photographs by Isa Lorenzo.

The proceeds will go to the I Can Serve Foundation, which is dedicated to empowering women with breast cancer.

"Our space will showcase the most relevant photography in the country," said Lorenzo, who has a Masters Degree in Media and Photography from the Parson's School of Design in New York.

At I Can Serve, breast cancer survivors reach out to other survivors and cancer support groups to help them recover and heal.

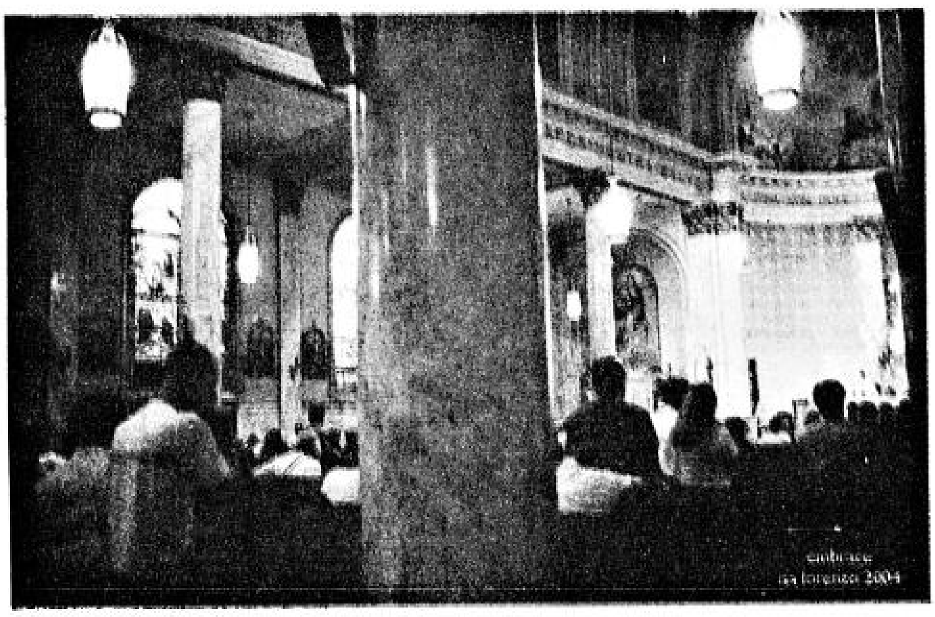
The photographs in the "Healing Spaces" exhibit have been turned into occasional note cards, which are very timely for Christmas. Call 8428961.

THE PHOTOGRAPHER and woman behind Silver Lens

I Can Serve is led by Kara Magsanoc-Alikpala, Crisann Olives Celdran together with Liza Juan, Lian Chua, Dayday David, Bet Lazatin and Tina Gutierrez. It networks with Vicky Jalandoni, Cecile Alvarez, Maritoni Fernandez, Lydia Paredes, Ellen Tordesillas, Heidi Yorac, Alice Orleans, Meryl Graham, Julie Torejon, Tang Singson and Bettina Osmena.

The foundation produces breast cancer awareness TV commercials. It has published "I Can Serve: A Network of People, Places and Services in the service of the Philippine Breast Cancer Community."

Counseling hotlines are 6873942 and icanserve@yahoo.com.


embrace
isa lorenzo 2004

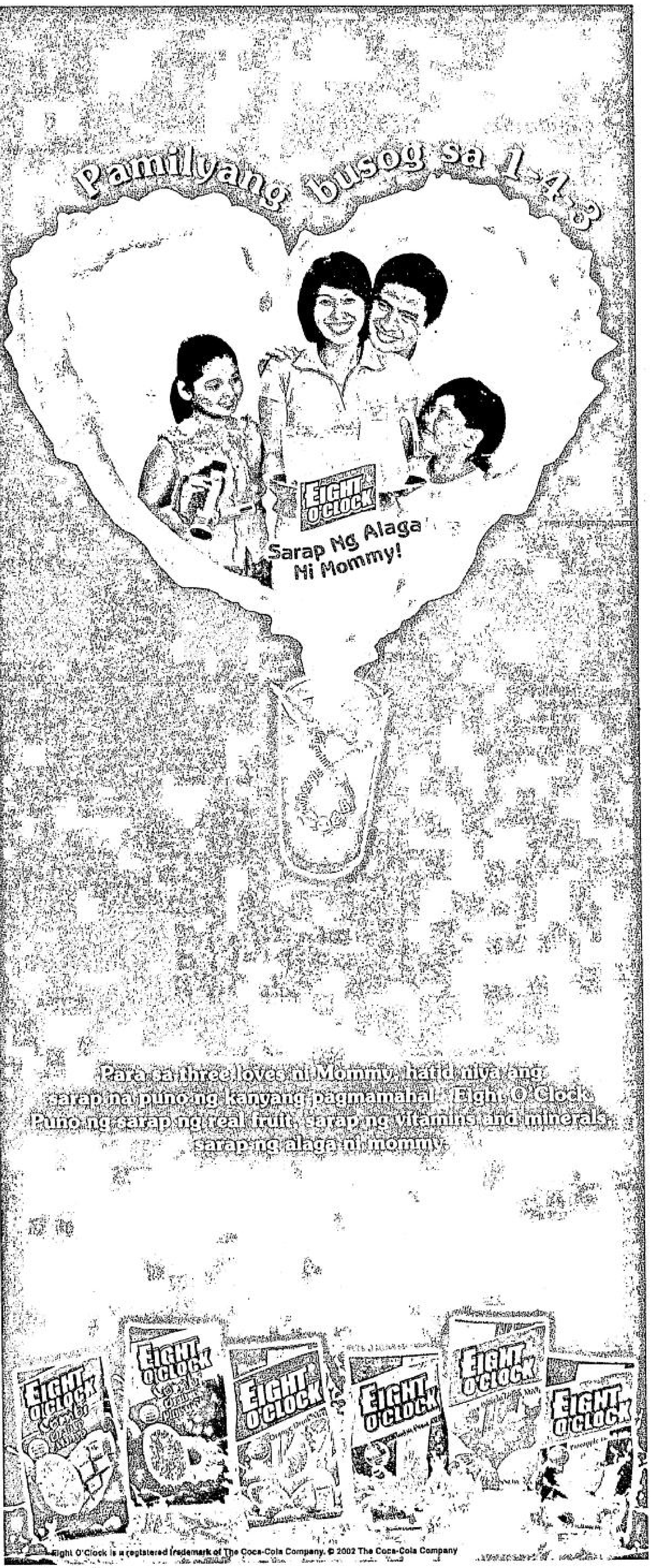
"EMBRACE"

GALLERY opening crowd

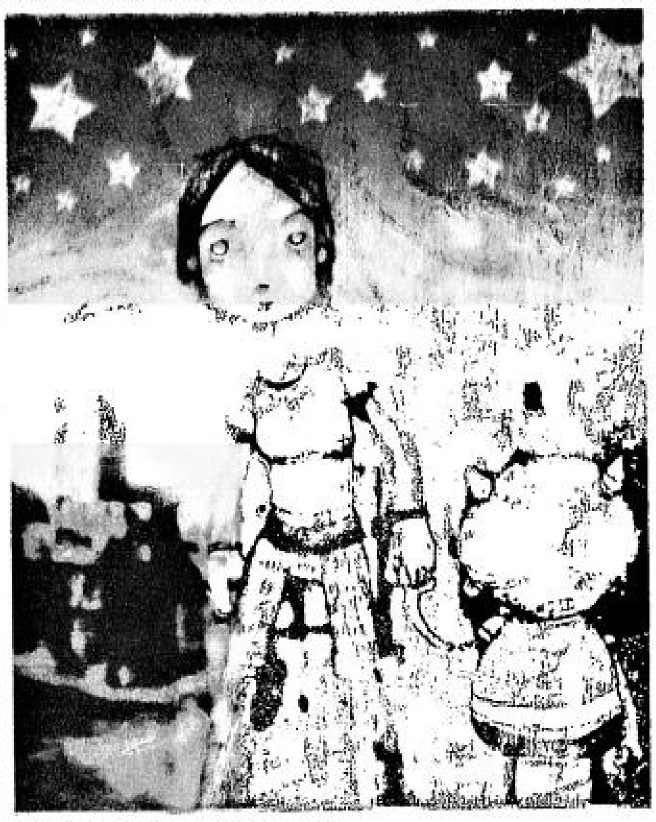
GALLERY PHOTOS BY ROGER MARGALLO

I CAN Serve's Kara Magsanoc-Alikpala (right) with Maritoni Fernandez

Healthy Lifestyles
HOTLINES: 723-7548 727-5984
PIGANG-PIGA ANG SARAP
Ooolala-rap!
PURE EXTRACT
Dalanghita
Kalamansi
PHILIPPINE LEMON DRINK MIX
Available at SM, Watson's and other leading supermarkets


Pamilyang busog sa 1-4-3
EIGHT O'CLOCK
Sarap Ng Alaga Ni Mommy!
Para sa three loves ni Mommy, hatid niya ang sarap na puno ng kanyang pagmamahal - Eight O'Clock. Puno ng sarap ng real fruit, sarap ng vitamins and minerals, sarap ng alaga ni mommy.
EIGHT O'CLOCK
EIGHT O'CLOCK
EIGHT O'CLOCK
EIGHT O'CLOCK
EIGHT O'CLOCK
EIGHT O'CLOCK

Eight O'Clock is a registered trademark of The Coca-Cola Company. © 2002 The Coca-Cola Company



"BELZEBOI," by Avid Liongoren

It's all in the (Liongoren) family

By Amadís Ma. Guerrero
Contributor

ABSTRACT artist Alfredo Liongoren

DURING his youth, visual artist Alfredo Liongoren felt alienated from his father. Education had created a gap between them. And so Fred reached out to him by showing his father his paintings, which were and are in the abstract style. Unfortunately, this only widened the gap between them, because his parent could not make heads or tails of his son's works.

Disturbed, Fred asked himself what was Filipino about his works, and he consulted his guru Steve Magannon, a Kalinga social anthropologist and expert on minorities (now a Unesco consultant in Paris), who gave him some words of wisdom which have since guided Liongoren.

"We are an amalgam, a melting pot," the artist, now 59, recalls that Magannon told him this.

"Don't make Filipino identity an issue. We all contribute to that 'pool'. You just contribute what you want to do. At this point, we cannot define national identity."

Magannon added, "Each generation must define what is national identity. Just keep on doing what you're doing. You make your own marks and contribute, and this will be studied later on. As for your father, he is the sum total, the product of his upbringing."

Liongoren declares, "It was affirming to me."

His latest show is ongoing at Pinto Gallery (Grand Heights Subdivision, Antipolo City) until Oct. 17. And it's a family affair. All of Fred and Norma Liongoren's three children—Erik, 29; Avid, 24; and Hannah, 19—have separate shows in the other rooms of the sprawling gallery, which is located in a scenic, verdant hilltop residential complex overlooking Metro Manila.

Liongoren's colors have changed considerably from the gray, cold, almost wintry landscapes of the mind that won awards from the Art Association of the Philippines in the past. Now the paintings are almost stark, with bold strokes of black and white, red and blue, and yellow-orange. The shapes are unrecognizable; they just convey a certain mood, a certain feeling. The browns simulate waves, for instance, and the yellows may suggest energy.

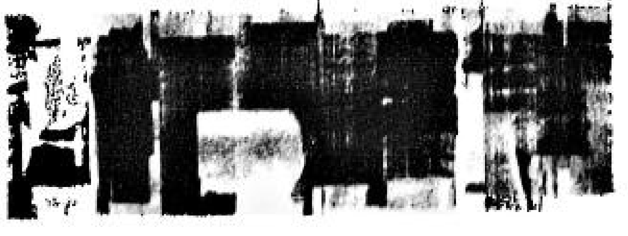
Liongoren adopts a cerebral approach to his works, and cites Zen as an influence. "The paintings are pure mindfulness, as a critic has noted. "There is an element of randomness in my strokes but also an element of control," Liongoren says. "The less color you use, the more demanding it is… " The series is untitled, "so as not to limit your interpretation."

His children took after him, but not stylistically. Their works are figurative and representational, almost expressionist. The digital prints of Avid and Hannah have a whimsical, childlike quality but with a bite, a certain maturity.

One work in monochromatic dark blue by Avid caught my attention. It shows the artist on a rooftop, surrounded by darkness, and wanting to take flight like an Icarus. (It turned out the print was inspired by a brownout, when the family went to their rooftop to cool off and take in the night air!)

"The Fashionista" by Hannah is a statement, with the girl (fashion plate?) depicted as a marionette.

Erik is the photographer of the family, and he comes up with sharp as well as soft-focus images in varied settings. He has a wide range of subjects—cultural minorities, models, children, actors, musicians and dancers. Erik has a feel for people and places, and it is easy to see why he is in demand as a commercial photographer (although he would rather do art photography).



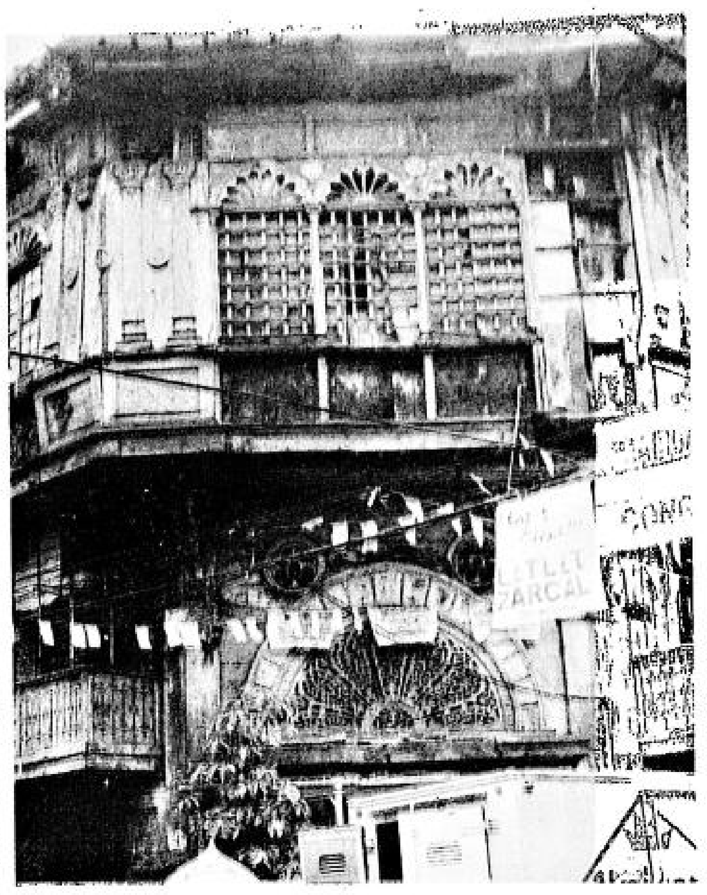
"UNTITLED #9," by Alfredo Liongoren

Breathless in Binondo

From page E1

There was a bottle of Quesada paste, which a friend of mine thinks is a product of that Filipino chemist and inventor, Eugenio Quesada, who also wrote a book about his hometown, Paete.

Many of the other bottles had such quaint labels. How wonderful to see that a family can set aside valuable office space to lovingly preserve these images from our past!



PAINFULLY beautiful 19th-century house in San Nicolas

AN OLD bottle in the Calvo-Teotico Museum, Escolta

Breathtaking buildings

At the far end of Escolta is one of the most beautiful streetscapes in the city with two breathtaking pre-World War II buildings facing each other: the Regina Building and the Perez-Samanillo. The former has a neo-Classical air akin to the government buildings in New Delhi. The latter is a masterpiece of Philippine Art Deco architecture. It was designed by Juan Luna's son, Andres Luna de San Pedro. One can detect in this splendid edifice touches of Angkor and even Meso-American motifs.

Coming out of Escolta, we reached the plaza dominated by Santa Cruz Church. On one side rose the pretty Monte de Piedad building. This had Art Nouveau touches mixed in with sculptures of eagles and human figures.

Crossing the plaza, we entered Ongpin Street. Walking on this road you would really feel you are no longer in the Philippines. The shop signs are in Chinese. Chinese music blares from radios. The fruit stalls sell exotic ware like persimmons and dragonfruits. You can even buy fresh sugarcane juice off a sidewalk pushcart. Pharmacies sell Chinese medicine made from things like roots and dried pods.

As a friend of mine points out, with Chinese medicine you can still see the natural sources of the prescriptions, unlike their Western counterparts. As such you never lose the sense that you are being healed by the wonder of nature itself.

Ongpin wares

Ongpin is where everyone goes to stock up on mahjong sets, incense, *champoy* and other things Chinese.

Popular stops on any shopping expedition include the many groceries where there is an abundance of teas, preserved fruits, dried beef, noodles.

You can also buy little nutcrackers for watermelon seeds! Now no one will ask how they crack the melon seeds in moon cakes!

In one street corner you will come upon a roadside shrine containing a cross with silver ornamentation. Passersby were praying before the cross and burning sticks of incense. This was truly an example of the merging of Christianity with other faiths.

Weaving in and out of traffic were the districts' many *calesas*. What impressed me were the lovely silver decorations reminiscent of the ones of the cross.

Of course, one must not forget to buy *hopia*. The *hopia* shops have now expanded the range of their ware. They sell soya milk, packed lunches, and even *tikoy* in a variety of flavors like strawberry and *pandan*.

In one store there is a recorded message which greets you when you enter and taunts you if you don't buy anything! (I am joking, ok?)

My favorite shop would have to be the chocolate store. Through the years, La Resurrecion has been selling its chocolate in *tablea* form for making the delicious drinks. There are two kinds: sweetened and unsweetened.

Proprietor Johnny To explains that he is a fourth-generation *chocolatero*. He proudly explains he gets his cacao all the way from Davao. He even points to a newspaper clipping that extols the virtues of his product.

Apparently a little of the lovely brown substance every day is good for you. Well, I will have to look into that!

He allowed me to explore his shop. There were buckets of the fabled gooey stuff. These ended up in little tablets set out on huge *bilaos*. Heavenly!

JOHNNY To, fourth generation of chocolatiers, at La Simpatica in Binondo

MR. ONG, the beaded slippers man from Binondo

Chocolate haven

Nearby is another store, La Simpatica, which is run by Lily Ong. La Simpatica sells beaded slippers still made in the Philippines. They have a good selection.

A friend of mine bought some shiny plain slippers, which were a hit the next evening at a reception in Makati!

At the other end of Ongpin is Binondo Church. This is home to the lovely image of Nuestra Señora de Pronto Socorro, thought to be the oldest painting in the Philippines.

Unfortunately we were not allowed to see the image as the parish priest (who was out in a meeting) had left strict orders that no one could view the painting without his approval.

His staff tried their best to seek permission from senior parishioners, but no one wanted to make a decision in the absence of the priest.

How sad that we had to forego visiting such a lovely devotional object and treasure of our heritage. Perhaps the next time the priest is out he may consider assigning a deputy.

We paused briefly for a dimsum lunch. Then we were off on our final leg: meandering through the streets of San Nicolas. This district probably has the biggest collection of 19th-century houses that still exist in Manila.

The houses were truly beautiful. I saw lovely windows as well as doorways and panels carved with stars, flowers, interlocking circles.

Sadly many homes were being torn down even as we walked by. Fortunately we found a corner which still had the original street sign formed by letter tiles.

After a long hot journey, we finally found what was easily the highlight of the day: a truly incredible house now mostly in ruins. It commanded most of a whole block. Rarely have I seen anything as beautiful.

It was three stories of fantastic carving. There were exquisite lunettes, brackets, columns, alcoves, rondelles. It was magnificent and oh so painful to look at, given its awful condition.

I went home that day with mixed feelings. I was happy to see so many wonderful things. But I must say that it was all so painfully beautiful for the fact that one is so aware everything is under threat.

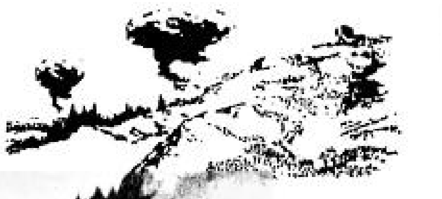
I suppose one can only find consolation in trying to hold on to a positive attitude. One must never lose sight of what must be saved for future generations in the midst of all that destruction.

Gonzalez at Podium, De Leon and Javier at West, Muñoz at Hiraya, Reyes at Second

VISUAL ARTS

GENE Gonzalez unveils his sculptures in "Back to Bliss (Homage to Love and Romance)" on Oct. 13-20 at The Podium. He presents 18 figures involved in various forms or embrace. Forged on highly polished stainless steel, the modernist sculptures are mounted on a special hardwood base. The figures are perfect for Asian-inspired houses or condos. Call 7239253.

WEST Gallery showcases R.M. de Leon's "Peace in the Valley?" until Oct. 19 at level 4, Megamall A. The exhibit features large-scale acrylic drawings on paper. Call 6341284.



"PEACE in the Valley 2," by R.M. de Leon

FERDIE Montemayor mounts his solo show "Drawings" until Oct. 13 at the Big and Small Art Co., 4/L, SM Megamall. Montemayor presents his latest works on paper, which are all done in ink. Call 6877425.

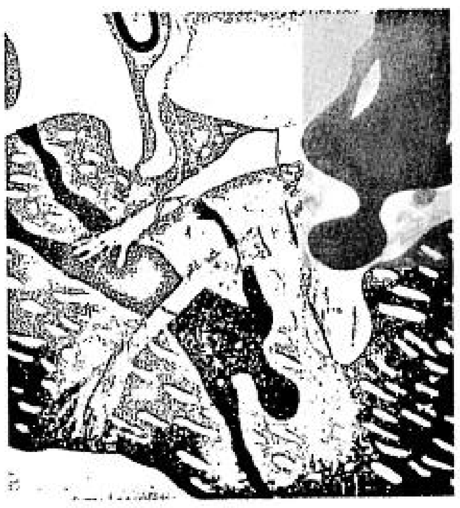
WEST Gallery presents Geraldine Javier's "There Is No there There" on Oct. 14-26 3/L, Glorietta 4, Ayala Center, Makati. The exhibit is a series of mixed-media works, bees wax on embroidered canvas that tackles issues and choices confronting 30-something singles. Call 7527028.

"SWEPT off Your Feet"

THE GOETHE-Institut features Ralf Tooten's "Eyes of Wisdom" on Oct. 15-21 at The Podium, Ortigas Center. The photographs were the result of a four-year journey around the world.

HIRAYA Gallery features Maya Muñoz's "The Unbearable Being of Nothingness," a visual paean to loafing on beaches, dabbling into spirituality, teenage angst and plain street sights. The exhibit runs on Oct. 16-Nov. 11 at 530 UN Avenue, Ermita, Manila. Call 5233331.

NANII Reyes will hold his third solo, "Transfigure," at the Second Gallery, 217 Doña Aurora St., Angono, Rizal on Oct. 15. "Transfigure" refers to the artist's shift from abstraction to figuration, and suggests the resurrection in art of the now vanished scenes from the artist's childhood. An Angono artist, Reyes is self-taught and regards National Artist Carlos "Botong Francisco as his major inspiration. The Second Gallery is part of the "Botong" residence. Guests of honor are Rep. Jack Duavit, Gov. Casimiro Ynares, Vice Gov. Jestoni Alarcon, UP Prof. Ligaya Tiamson Rubin, Board Member Noel Reyes, Mayor Gerry Calderon, Vice Mayor Aurora Villamayor, Councilor Rainier Rubin, Councilor Bernie Balagtas, Atty. Myrna Directo, Dr. Uding Reyes, Francisco Ortigas III, Cid Reyes, Lily Rivera and Gino Dormiendo.



"BUTANDING"

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Editor Louie C. Camino
ENTERTAINMENT Metro
Text us your feedback: inquirer ent name/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

The earth moved as Rico J, Basil sang at Araneta

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

A MUSICAL FRIENDSHIP was reinforced Friday night, between Rico J (left) and Basil, and between them and their followers.

THE FANS who flocked to "The Way We Were" concert of Rico J. Puno and Basil Valdez at the Araneta Coliseum last Friday night would surely talk about the stark contrast for days to come.

SHOW STOPPER

Basil was as formal as Rico J was naughty. Basil quietly addressed the crowd, while Rico J worked them to fits of laughter. It was painful to watch Basil's attempts to dance, after seeing Rico J, the vintage "Total Performer," comfortably shaking his booty.

They were such opposites on stage that they did not really need to wear different colored suits. Rico could have been in white and Basil in black to drive home the obvious point.

But the way they sang was another subject, for they made beautiful music together. Any misgivings about putting these two performers with conflicting styles together on one stage, for the first time in their 27 years in show business, faded away faster than you could say "baby, baby."

Their appetizer was a medley of standards from "The Great American Songbook"—"The Way You Look Tonight," "All the Way," "Come Fly With Me," with Rico easily hitting the high notes.

Good behavior

Basil then took the stage alone and served the first course—Ryan Cayabyab's "Nais Ko," "You," which was written by his late friend from Ateneo grade school and fellow Circus Band member Gerry Paraiso, and "Lift Up Your Hands" by Cecile Azarcon.

Rico came back just when the mood was turning somber, and traded covers with Basil. He flawlessly executed "Wildflower" after Basil sang "Of All the Things." When it was Rico J's turn again, it was easy to say who had a better rapport with the audience.

But Rico J's jokes were decidedly tame, probably because he feared offending Basil's finer sensibilities. As he said at one point, he had to behave himself and tone down the green jokes lest the church-going Basil walk out of the concert.

He was true to form when he had the stage to himself, poking fun at his friends in the audience, including fellow singers Nonoy Zuñiga, Marco Sison, actor Rudy Fernandez, host Willie Revillame and Sen. Jinggoy Estrada.

Rico J also had no qualms about reading the lyrics of some songs off the monitors, but he did not need any help when it came to his own songs, like the themes of his movies with Nora Aunor, Niño Muhlach and Alma Moreno, and his well-appreciated cover of "McArthur's Park."

Yes, he could still sing them as well as he did during his heyday in the 1970s, and he cajoled the audience to clap "out of respect." But they really did not need any encouragement.

When both Basil and Rico J took the stage again, they reminisced about their similar starts in the business as folk singers. Basil was earning P10 an hour, with free meals, while Rico J got P50 for a gig at the Spindle bar.

Guitar men

They let the audience peek into that former life when they strummed guitars, although Rico had to borrow Basil's when his turn came because his son's guitar wouldn't work, and he sang songs from his Spindle days.

Basil sang Cat Stevens' "Sad Lisa," while Rico J did Joe Cocker's "You are So Beautiful." Together, they sang "Love Song" which was also sung by Elton John, and Kansas' "Dust in the Wind," completing the trip down that particular part of memory lane.

The audience gamely welcomed their covers of newer songs and a medley of Barry Manilow karaoke classics, but they reserved their loudest cheers for the pair's original songs. They paid to hear them sing their own songs.

Basil sang songs penned by George Canseco— "Hanggang Sa Dulo ng Walang Hanggan," "Kastilyong Buhangin," "Ngayon and Kailanman" and "Ngayon." Basil said he would not have been able to sing these songs if not for Viva's Vic del Rosario, who asked him to sing these as themes of Viva movies. Otherwise, he said, he would have remained singing at the Lost Horizon of the Philippine Plaza.

Looking up the ceiling

Rico sang his own hits, "My Love" and "Buhat." He was on his way to putting the final flourish to his "May Bukas Pa" when the Araneta Coliseum suddenly started rocking, and it was not because of the crowd's excitement. A few seconds later, the people realized it was an earthquake, and they nervously looked up at the domed ceiling and the big lights that might come crashing down on them.

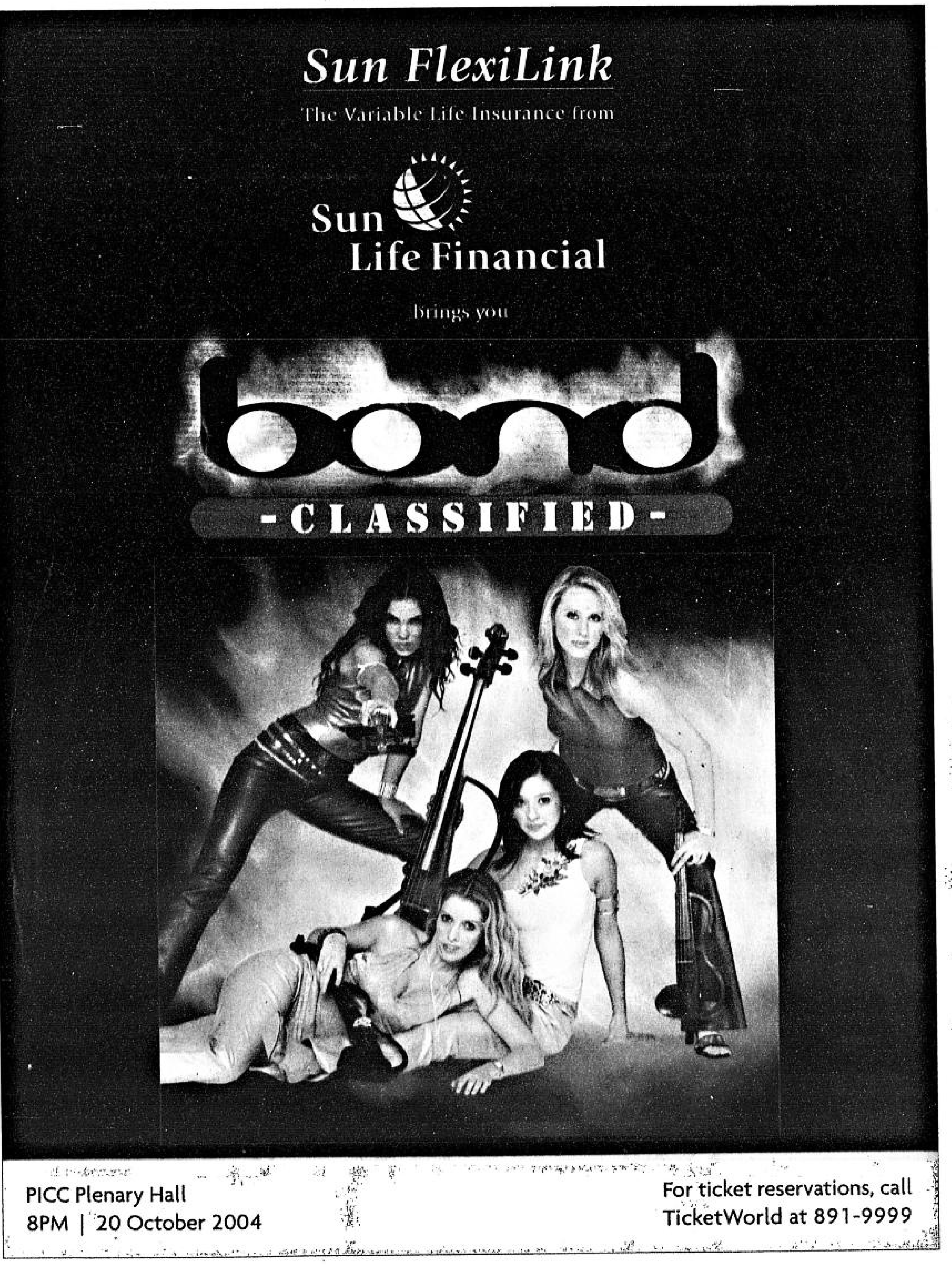
People were still looking at the ceiling, and some even started to leave the coliseum, as Rico J finished the song with gusto. "Why was everybody looking up?" he quipped. Told there was an earthquake, he coolly dismissed the fear when he said it was nature's way of saying "The Way We Were" was a successful show.

The audience apparently agreed for they stayed on and lustily sang along with Rico J as he sang "The Way We Were" and "Magkasuyo."

Basil came back on stage to sing Rico J's "Macho Guwapito" and Rico J encouraged him to dance to it with him, however badly. Rico J then tried to sing Basil's "Tuwing Umuulan at Kapiling Ka," even aping Basil's way of toying with the microphone cable while singing.

Then they sang their biggest hits— Rico's "Kapalaran" and Basil's "Hindi Kita Malilumutan," after which they took their bows and hugged each other while the audience gave them a standing ovation.

After the 2-and-a-half-hour show, a musical friendship started, one that hopefully would not take another 27 years to celebrate.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ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	G1 GLORIETTA 1	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU
1 SHARK TALE	1 THE PUNISHER	GUARANTEED SEATS 1 WIMBLEDON 1 35, 3 40, 5 45, 7 50, 9 55, 12 00	1 SHARK TALE
2 WIMBLEDON	2 SHARK TALE	GUARANTEED SEATS 2 SHARK TALE 2 00, 4 00, 6 00, 8 00, 10 00, 12 00	2 OPEN WATER
3 THE PUNISHER	3 OPEN WATER	GUARANTEED SEATS 3 THE PUNISHER 1 20, 3 50, 6 20, 8 50, 11 20	3 SAVED
4 RESIDENT EVIL: APOCALYPSE	4 FENG SHUI	GUARANTEED SEATS 4 OPEN WATER 1 10, 3 10, 5 10, 7 10, 9 10, 11 10	4 RESIDENT EVIL: APOCALYPSE
5 OPEN WATER		GUARANTEED SEATS 5 SHARK TALE 12 40, 2 40, 4 40 FAHRENHEIT 9/11 [illegible]	5 13 GOING ON 30

G4
GLORIETTA 4

1 RESIDENT EVIL: APOCALYPSE
2 WIMBLEDON
GUARANTEED SEATS 3 THE PUNISHER 12 30, 3 00, 5 30, 8 00, 10 30
4 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY
5 SHARK TALE/ RAISING HELEN
6 SHARK TALE
7 OPEN WATER

GB1
GREENBELT 1

1 SPANISH FILM FESTIVAL For inquiries, call 526-1448
2 SHARK TALE 11 20, 1 20, 3 20, 5 20, 7 20, 9 20

At the Activity Center

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER	AYALA CENTER CEBU
GERMAN FESTIVAL: GERMAN EXPO October 8 to 10, 2004	ANSON'S EXHIBIT October 4 to 17, 2004	SIGN LANGUAGE CULMINATING ACTIVITIES October 10, 2004

ENTERTAINMENT LIVE!

GREENBELT 2	GREENBELT 3
GREENBELT 2: MUSIC STYLES FEATURING THOR October 9, 7:00pm to 10:00pm	SPANISH FESTIVAL: LETRAS Y FIGURAS PAINTING EXHIBIT October 8 to 15, Greenbelt 3 Lobby

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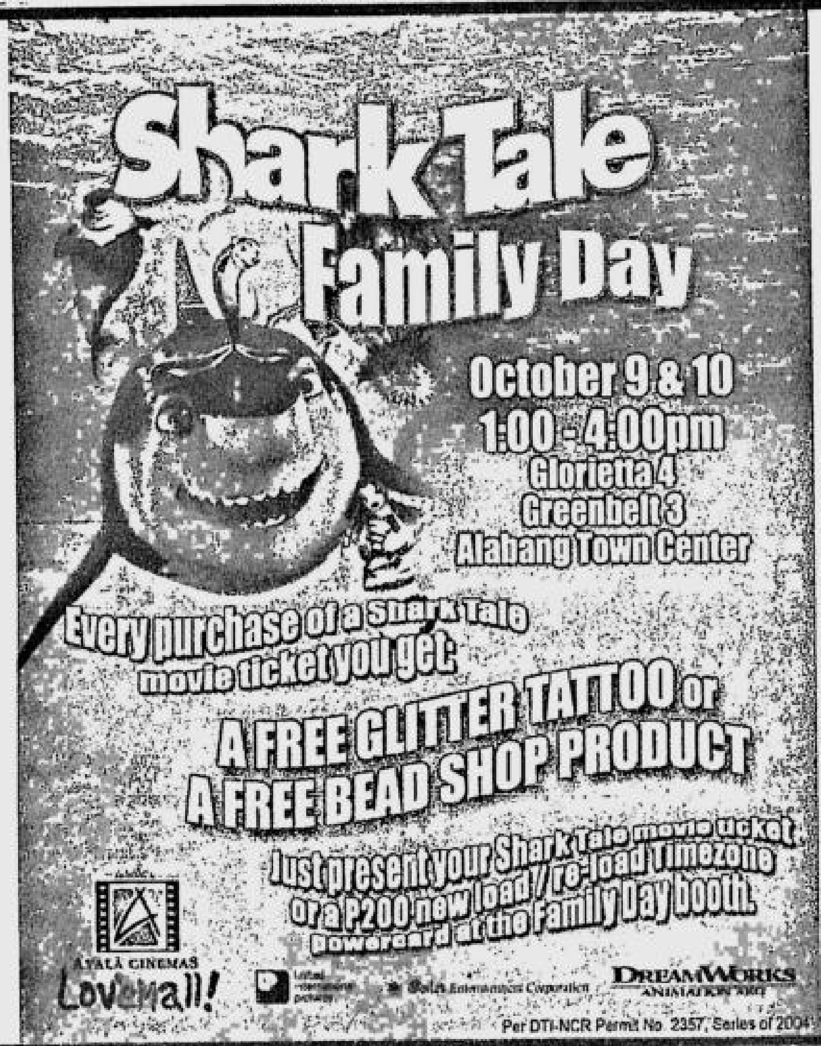
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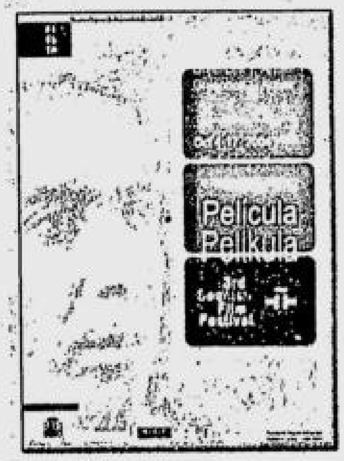

SCREENING SCHEDULE (OCT 9 - 11)

OCT 9 (SAT)

2:00 pm	Historias Minimas
4:30 pm	El Caballero Don Quijote
7:00 pm	En la ciudad
9:30 pm	The City of No Limits

OCT 10 (SUN)

2:00 pm	Dias de Fútbol
4:30 pm	The City of No Limits
7:00 pm	El Otro Lado de la Cama
9:30 pm	La Caja 507

OCT 11 (MON)

2:00 pm	Smoking Room
4:30 pm	El Juego de la Silla
7:00 pm	The City of No Limits
9:30 pm	La Primera Noche

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1 SHARK'S TALE

2 WIMBLEDON

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BOURNE SUPREMACY
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- SM Southmall Cinema 2
- SM City North EDSA Cinema 1
- SM City Fairview Cinema 11
- SM City Manila Cinema 12
- SM City Sta. Mesa Cinema 5

FAHRENHEIT 9/11
MTRCB Rating: PG 13

- SM City Fairview Cinema 3
- SM Southmall Cinema 10
- SM City Sta. Mesa Cinema 6

OPEN WATER
MTRCB RATING: PG 13

- SM City Bicutan Cinema 2
- SM Supercenter Sucat Cinema 3
- SM City Manila Cinema 7
- SM City North Edsa Cinema 6
- SM Megamall Cinema 5
- SM City Sta. Mesa Cinema 10
- SM Southmall Cinema 3
- SM City Fairview Cinema 9

THE PUNISHER
MTRCB Rating: R 13

- SM City Fairview Cinema 5
- SM Megamall Cinema 10
- SM City Sta. Mesa Cinema 8
- SM City Southmall Cinema 8
- SM Tutuban Cinema 2
- SM City North Edsa Cinema 4
- SM City Manila Cinema 1

RAISING HELEN
MTRCB Rating: GP

- SM Southmall Cinema 5
- SM Megamall Cinema 11

RESIDENT EVIL
MTRCB Rating: R13

- SM City Supercenter Sucat Cinema 1
- SM City Tutuban Cinema 1
- SM City Fairview Cinema 4
- SM City Bicutan Cinema 4
- SM City Sta. Mesa Cinema 3
- SM City Southmall Cinema 9
- SM City Manila Cinema 4
- SM City North Edsa Cinema 8
- SM Megamall Cinema 4

SHARK TALE
MTRCB Rating: G

- SM Megamall Cinema 3
- SM City Fairview Cinema 8
- SM City Tutuban Cinema 4
- SM Sucat Cinema 2
- SM City Sta. Mesa Cinema 5
- SM City Southmall Cinema 4
- SM City Manila Cinema 2
- SM City North Edsa Cinema 2
- SM City Bicutan Cinema 3

SECRET WINDOW
MTRCB Rating: R13

- SM City Fairview Cinema 1
- SM City Manila Cinema 3
- SM Megamall Cinema 12

WIMBLEDON
SUBJECT TO MTRCB RATING

- SM Southmall Cinema 1
- SM City Fairview Cinema 10
- SM City Manila Cinema 5
- SM City North Edsa Cinema 7
- SM CitySta. Mesa Cinema 9
- SM Megamall Cinema 2

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Hush
5:00pm

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SM CINEMA

2

October at Red Door

RED DOOR, the newest restaurant and bar along Pasig Boulevard (formerly Shaw Boulevard Extension), ushers October with a feast of stars.

Start the week with Franco on Mondays, watch a mini-concert series with Cruxada on Tuesdays, Essence on Wednesdays, and the R&B sensation Thor and Rewind on Thursdays.

Alamid, Meagan Aguilar with Flower Child go acoustic on Oct. 15. Master rapper Francis Magalona performs on Oct. 22. Rivermaya takes its turn on Oct. 29.

Red Door gives the partyholics reason to feel delighted on all Saturdays of October. It's a hot sizzling night with a stimulating fashion show on Oct. 16.

Pop idol and Aliw Awards most promising male artist Lance Raymundo performs with the R&B band Xsentrik on Oct 23.

Performing on Oct. 30 are Alana and Pido with Take One.

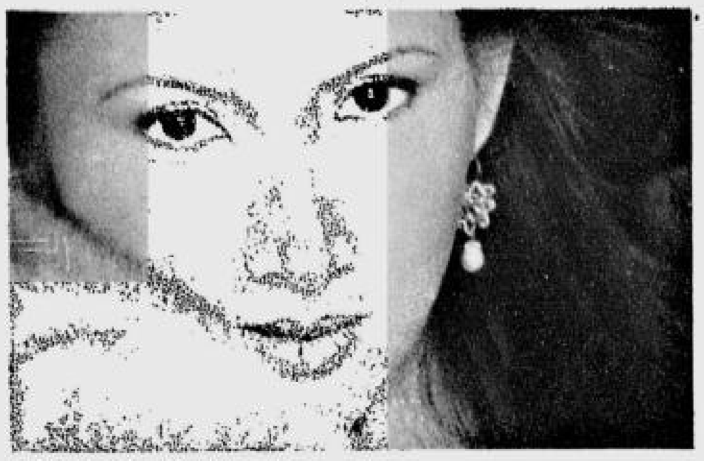
Red Door welcomes Halloween with a magic show and henna tattooing.

Whether you like acoustic, R&B, alternative, dance or reggae, there's something for everyone at Red Door.

Red Door is at 173 Pasig Blvd., Pasig City. It is open Mondays to Saturdays, from 5 p.m. to 2 a.m. With an indoor-outdoor seating capacity of 400, it's ideal for parties, conferences, birthdays and other social gatherings.

DID YOU KNOW...

Spotted at Rockwell at the Power Plant Mall in Makati City one recent Saturday afternoon were actor **Onemig Bondoc** and Viva Hot Babe **Sheree.** The pair watched the movie "Resident Evil" at the Rockwell cineplex. Onemig was in an all-black outfit, while Sheree was in a spaghetti-strap blouse, denim pants and white baseball cap. The two were eating hotdogs. Also seen malling at Rockwell that same afternoon were "Feng Shui" star **Lotlot de Leon** and her four children. **Angelica Panganiban,** of TV's "Mangarap Ka" and Laurice Guillen's new movie "Santa Santita," was also there, shopping with her mom.



'THANKFUL' IN BAGUIO

Ayen Munji-Laurel goes to SM Baguio to promote her second studio album, "Thankful," produced by ML Entertainment and distributed by BMG Records, on Saturday, Oct. 16. "Thankful" has 12 original, OPM songs. The carrier single, "Kailan Nga Ba?," is now being played on radio; its music video is No. 8 in the MYX Daily Countdown. Ayen's album launches are sponsored by the PCSO, Globe Platinum, Ratsky, The Podium, Alabang Town Center, Shangri-la Plaza, China Star, Banana Leaf, Red Crab and SM Supermalls. On Nov. 19, Ayen will have a concert at the GSIS Theater.

Battle of bands

SHOW TIME

TO CELEBRATE Oktoberfest, catch free, live performances by the country's best rock bands on all Saturdays of October at the 2nd level activity hub of Starmall Las Piñas.

Metropolis Star Alabang launches the search for the next superstar band in Star Jam Battle of the Bands 2004. The one-day event is open to all amateur bands with 4-8 members who are at least 18 years old. The music may be rock, pop, R&B or alternative.

Application forms are available at the Metropolis Star Marketing Department. Call 850-3845 for more details.

Starmall Edsa has its own search, Star Paziklaban Battle of the Bands 2004, open to amateur or professional bands who have no recording contracts. Applicants must submit a demo tape of their songs. Application forms are available at the Starmall Edsa Marketing Dept. The grand finals are on Oct. 30.

For more details, call 724-4992.

Kakai, mistress of reinvention

From page 4

tect each other on and off stage.

Busy band

Their gig calendar is invariably crammed as the band is booked six days a week: Soundstage in Cainta every Tuesday, Klownz Araneta every Wednesday, Ratsky's Malate every Thursday, Ratsky's Morato every Friday, Music Factory in the City of San Fernando every Saturday, and Klownz Quezon Avenue every Sunday.

On Sept. 24, they had a special show at the Pickup Bar and Restaurant in Angeles City.

On top of all this, Kakai is in two GMA-7 shows, "Marinara" and "Idol Ko Si Kap." Kakai and the band are also starting work on their second album from Viva Records, their follow-up to the hit "Sasakyan Kita."

Still, Kakai and the gang find the time to update and reinvent their looks every so often. Kakai goes to Dr. Tito Calayan for her skin care. She also visits Salon de Manila, with the rest of the band, for her ever changing hairstyles.

"Recently, we all just decided to get hair extensions," Kakai says. "For a change."

For Kakai and the Boxers, reinvention is a never-ending process. "That's our edge as performers, as singers and as comics," Kakai asserts. "Constant reinvention. You should always change your look, your repertoire, your routine, so that the audience will not get bored and lose interest in you."

That's the gospel, according to the Mistress of Reinvention.

POWER PLANT CINEMA
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OPEN WATER PG13 12:00,2:00,4:00, 6:00,8:00,10:00	SHARK TALE GP 12:20,2:20,4:20, 6:20,8:20,10:20	WHITE CHICKS PG13 12:40,3:00,5:20,7:40,10:00
WIMBLEDON PG13 12:30,2:50,5:10,7:30,9:50	PUNISHER 2 R13 12:00,2:30,5:00,7:30,10:00	SHARK TALE GP 1:40,3:40

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SHANG CINEPLEX

① SHARK TALE
FS: 12 PM, 2 PM, 4 PM, 6 PM, 8 PM
LMF: 10:00 PM (G)

② PUNISHER
(R-13)

③ OPEN WATER
(PG-13)

④ WIMBLEDON
FS: 11:35 AM, 1:55 PM, 4:15 PM, 6:35 PM
LMF: 9:00 PM (PG-13)

PREMIERE THEATRE SHARK TALE
FS: 11 AM, 1 PM, 3 PM, 5 PM, 7 PM, LMF: 9 PM
(G)

For more information
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1	SHARK TALE 11:40, 2:05, 4:30 6:55, 9:30 GP
2	SHARK TALE 12:10, 2:35, 5:00 7:25, 10:20 GP
3	OPEN WATER 11:00, 1:05, 3:15, 5:15 7:20, 9:25, 11:10 PG-13
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R13

CINEMA 2 SHARK TALE
11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 10:00
GP

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Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX

3 Dolby SHARK TALE
12:10 pm 2:20 pm 4:30 pm 6:40 pm 8:55 pm

4 SHUI FENG SHUI
11:35 am 1:55 pm 4:15 pm 6:35 pm 8:55 pm

5 dts RESIDENT EVIL: APOCALYPSE
11:55 am 2:10 pm 4:25 pm 6:45 pm 8:55 pm

6 Dolby OPEN WATER
11:05 am 1:05 pm 3:05 pm 5:05 pm 7:05 pm 9:05 pm

7 Dolby THE PUNISHER
1:00 pm 3:40 pm 6:20 pm 9:00 pm

ARANETA COLISEUM

Oct 13	SAN MIGUEL vs GINEBRA 7:20 pm
Oct 16	JASMINE TRIAS CONCERT
Oct 17	ALASKA vs FEDEX 6:30 pm
Oct 20	SAN MIGUEL vs SHELL 7:20 pm
Oct 24	GINEBRA vs SHELL 6:30 pm
Oct 27	FEDEX vs COKE 7:20 pm
Dec 11	JULIO IGLESIAS CONCERT
Dec 25	DISNEY ON ICE : Princess Classics

For tickets, call TicketNet at 911-5555

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY, LEGEND OF CROCODILE
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	HIBLA / MAPANUKSO
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	KERIDA
B	CLOSED
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA 1, 2, 3 & 4	SHARKTALE / WIMBLEDON / OPEN WATER / PUNISHER
PREMIERE THEATRE	SHARK TALE
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	SECRET WINDOW
CINEMA-2	CRISANTA, IBA KA
CINEMA-3	SECRETARY
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	BOURNE SUPREMACY
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	RAISING HELEN
CINEMA-6	VIP ROOM (RE-ISSUE)
CINEMA-7	EXORCIST THE BEGINNING
CINEMA-8	ANACONDAS
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	RESIDENT EVIL APOCALYPSE
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	SHARKS TALE
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	PUNISHER
CINEMA-12	OPEN WATER
CINEMA-14	WIMBLEDON
CINEMA-15	FENG SHUI
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
(LAS PIÑAS)	ANACONDAS
CINEMA-1	FENG SHUI
CINEMA-2	DODGEBALL
CINEMA-4	[illegible]
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

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GALLERIA 632-9115 to 16

Cinema	Film	Times
CINEMA 1 THX	THE PUNISHER	11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00
2	SHARK TALE	11:10, 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00
3	OPEN WATER	11:55, 1:55, 3:55, 7:55, 10:00
4	SHARK TALE	10:40, 12:50, 3:00, 5:10, 7:20, 9:30
5	WHITE CHICKS Sneak Preview	
6	WIMBLEDON	10:20, 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
7	THE BOURNE SUPREMACY	12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
8	FENG SHUI	12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
9	RESIDENT EVIL 2	10:45, 1:00, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45, 10:00
10	RAISING HELEN	11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00

Regular Price: P150 THX / P95/65 for two levels cinemas / P95 for one level cinemas

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

Cinema	Film	Times
1	SHARK TALE	11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50
2	OPEN WATER	10:30, 12:20, 2:10, 4:00, 5:50, 7:40, 9:30
3	WIMBLEDON	11:10, 1:30, 3:50, 6:10, 8:20, 10:00
4	WHITE CHICKS Sneak Preview	
5	THE PUNISHER	11:05, 1:40, 4:15, 6:50, 9:40
6	FENG SHUI	10:35, 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50
7	RESIDENT EVIL 2	11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50

METRO EAST 682-8193/99 / 682-8280

Cinema	Film	Times
1	OPEN WATER	10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:50, 9:00
2	WHITE CHICKS Sneak Preview	
3	FENG SHUI	11:20, 1:40, 4:10, 6:30, 9:00
4	RAISING HELEN	11:00, 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00
5	SHARK TALE	10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:50, 8:50, 10:30
6	WIMBLEDON	10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:50, 8:50, 10:30
7	THE PUNISHER	11:20, 2:10, 5:00, 7:50, 10:30
8	RESIDENT EVIL 2	10:25, 12:50, 3:15, 5:40, 8:05, 10:30

NOVALICHES 935-3229 / 31

Cinema	Film	Times
1	WHITE CHICKS Sneak Preview	
2	OPEN WATER	10:30, 12:20, 2:10, 4:00, 5:50, 7:30, 8:55
3	FENG SHUI	10:15, 12:45, 3:15, 5:45, 8:30
4	SHARK TALE	11:45, 1:55, 4:05, 6:15, 8:30
5	THE PUNISHER	11:00, 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 8:55
6	RESIDENT EVIL 2	11:00, 1:20, 3:40, 6:00, 8:25
7	RAISING HELEN	1:00, 3:30, 6:00, 8:30
8	THE BOURNE SUPREMACY	11:00, 1:20, 3:40, 6:00, 8:30

Citisquare MALABON 288-0985/2575

Cinema	Film
1	GODSEND
2	FENG SHUI
3	SHARK TALE
4	JANDARA

CAINTA 240-4661

Cinema	Film
1	OPEN WATER
2	THE PUNISHER
3	SHARK TALE
4	FENG SHUI

To protect two white divas, they have to become them.

WHITE CHICKS
FROM THE DIRECTOR OF "SCARY MOVIE"
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'THE TWILIGHT SAMURAI'

Perfect blend of comic and tragic

THE SAMURAI as family man: Iguchi (Hiroyuki Sanada) lives only from the joy of taking care of his daughters.

By Constantino C. Tejero

REVIEW

"THEY'RE no longer showing R-rated movies," a moviegoer murmured to his two companions at the Japanese film festival. *"Puro* facts of life *na lang, ano?"*

The guy noted the dearth of sexually explicit movies at SM Megamall nowadays, even in hitherto liberal film fests.

In an afterthought, he added: "But the one we just saw is very good, though."

He was referring to Yoji Yamada's "The Twilight Samurai," which just received loud applause after its screening at Eiga Sai, the festival of Japanese contemporary films presented through September and October by the Japan Foundation-Manila in cooperation with the Cultural Center of the Philippines, the University of the Philippines Film Institute, The Podium and SM Cinema.

That ordinary moviegoer's comment underscores the appeal and power of this film, which has drawn acclaim from both the public and critics.

Yamada, known to us for his farces and melodramas such as "The Yellow Handkerchief" and the "Tora-san" series, has come up with a perfect blending of the comic and the tragic in this film.

Nominated for best foreign language film at the American Academy Awards this year, it is only the 11th Japanese film so nominated —and the first in over two decades, after "Kagemusha" and "Muddy River" in the early 1980s.

This one belongs to the *chambara* film, that genre of Japanese historical or period movies dealing with the samurai (the soldier class of the lower nobility in feudal Japan), with such classic as "Hagakure" and such popularizer in the West as Akira Kurosawa.

The genre became so popular that it directly influenced the Western, while many of the Japanese films cited at the Oscars deal with the samurai or have samurai for protagonists: "Kagemusha," "Rashomon," "Gate of Hell," "The Legend of Musashi," "Kwaidan."

A different way

But even then, Yamada's is not your typical samurai movie, as it has a different way of telling the story. He has simply taken a divergent tack in tracing the way of the samurai, different from such Kurosawa masterworks as "Yojimbo," "Sanjuro," "Seven Samurai," "Throne of Blood," or even Nagisa Oshima's recent "Gohatto."

Here, Yamada explores the life of a samurai in its fullness, in all its humanity, not just within the hierarchy but also, in large part, his domestic life.

Set in the Meiji period, this is the story of Seibei Iguchi, a low-level samurai. It was at that time when radical changes were happening in government and society. In a few years, the samurai and its chivalric code of conduct would be obsolete.

At film's start, Iguchi's wife has just died of consumption. He has to sell his sword to pay for the funeral expenses and to put food on the table. Thus he has been reduced to using a wooden stick in fighting.

The rest of the film tells how the widower keeps balancing his official and domestic duties in serving his lord and taking care of his two little daughters and senile mother.

Behind his back his colleagues call him "Twilight Samurai," as he goes home immediately after work at twilight instead of joining them in the bars for a night of carousing. This then is the story of the samurai as family man.

(The nickname, and the film's title, could as well refer to the passing of the whole samurai culture.)

A common soldier who tries to raise a family, earning his keep as a scribe and insect-trap maker, Iguchi takes in stoic silence what life throws at him.

Despite poverty and low rank, however, he tries all means to keep his family intact, and proves himself as father, son, servant, warrior and lover.

Masterfully played by Hiroyuki Sanada ("a dramatic actor of a presence and stature rivaling Toshiro Mifune," says a critic), he could very well stand for the average man.

He is unambitious, he doesn't crave for wealth or status, yet he holds a strong idea of what happiness is.

(One reviewer points out the film's point as that "the life of an ambitionless, family-oriented man may be happier and more appreciated than that of an engaged warrior.")

Unusual naturalism

Realistic in details, the film is so unlike other samurai movies in its depiction of the common and the ignoble in the life of the samurai. This is emphasized by the low lighting, muted color and tone of the visual composition.

An instance of this unusual naturalism is the lurid image of the flies swarming over the corpse of a fallen warrior. Compare that to the magnificent image of the battlefield in Kurosawa's "Ran," which is littered with corpses but made beautiful by the redness of torn banners and spilled blood.

Details of domesticity and the quotidian keep intruding into the scenes. While Iguchi is being dressed up for battle, his kimono arranged and hair done by his childhood love, Tomoe (played with so much beauty and sadness by Rie Miyazawa), a peddler of wicker hampers and baskets enters the frame loudly hawking his ware on the street.

While samurai movies have always been associated with action (power, movement, energy) in the same way Chinese kung-fu movies have been, this film is relatively quiet and "actionless" except for two sword fights.

There is, toward the end, the obligatory scene showcasing martial-art prowess (conducted after the two duelists' long conversation about the hardness of life and the influence of foreign culture). Yet the climactic scene is still linked to the samurai's domestic concerns more than to obedience to his lord or loyalty to his clan.

This is one of the most affecting films to have graced the local screen in a long while. Don't miss its final screening at the Eiga Sai on Tuesday, Oct. 12, 2 p.m., in Cinema 6 at SM Megamall.

We've seen DVD copies rampant on the market but we chose to watch this exceptional film on the wide screen, where it is more aesthetically satisfying.

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Kakai, mistress of reinvention

By Bayani San Diego
Contributor

FASHION FORWARD. Although she admits she's hardly faultless fashion-wise, Kakai can be sporty, formal or dressy, depending on the show and the occasion.

KAKAI, the lead singer of the comedy band K and the Boxers, knows only too well the importance of new ideas and concepts in terms of their repertoire and comic routines as well as in their fashion.

"We really make an effort to look good on stage," says Kakai. "Not just presentable, but fabulous. Even though our jokes are rowdy and wacky, we still look stylish. That way, we're able to keep the audience's respect."

Unlike other bands whose members go on stage looking as if they were just going malling, Kakai and the rest of the band (Daniel Lardizabal, Cris Samonte and Shanna Hife) try to look their best every time they perform.

"Especially since I'm also on TV," Kakai explains. "On TV, I am always cast as the *jologs, mukhang kargador, babaing bakla."* In short, totally devoid of glamour. "That's why I try to look good on stage, so people would say 'She's pretty *naman pala* in person.'"

Always different

She makes it a point to make her TV roles and onstage persona as distinct and diverse as possible. "Sometimes we talk about what we're going to wear for gigs," she says. "We all agree to come in something sporty one night, something formal and dressy on another night. Or I'll be glamorous while Cris will be in rubber shoes but his outfit will be just as colorful."

Diversity is the key, according to Kakai. "We try to look always different on stage," she says.

Once, the members of K and the Boxers went on stage dressed as their favorite action heroes. "Daniel was Wolverine from 'X-Men,' Cris was Neo from 'The Matrix,' and I was Lara Croft from 'Tomb Raider.'"

Lara Croft is Shanna's favorite look for Kakai. "She looks like Angelina Jolie when she has her hair in a ponytail," says Shanna.

Although Kakai is not a big fan of malling ("I hate walking around"), she has come to terms with the fact that she needs to always buy new clothes for her shows.

"I buy my clothes everywhere," she says. "Sometimes I find it too expensive to shop in malls. And I have a hard time looking for my size in local stores."

She once spent the whole day going all over Glorietta. "But I was able to buy only two outfits!"

No time for Tutuban

How Kakai wishes she can join Cris and Shanna in Tutuban in Divisoria, where Cris has a *suki* , a merchant he regularly patronizes, where he buys Thailand-made clothes and Shanna her jazzed-up jeans. "But I don't have the time (to go to Tutuban)," sighs Kakai.

Shanna shares that Kakai often buys a little something for her whenever the latter goes on her rare mall expeditions. "Because it's so easy to shop for Shanna," explains Kakai. "Even in the P99 Store, you can find something that will fit Shanna."

Kakai and the other members of the band often act as each other's stylists and fashion advisers. "We're very open to each other," she says. "We tell each other if we think an outfit does not suit us. Like I often tell Cris to avoid the hip hop look because it's no longer in fashion. And I tell Daniel not to wear all-white outfits, including white pointed shoes! We don't want him to look like Tony Ferrer (the Pinoy version of James Bond, Agent Tony Falcon, in movies in the '60s and '70s)!"

Kakai is the first to admit that she is hardly faultless fashion-wise. "I also have my off-days," she admits. "Sometimes I feel tired and I am not in the mood to dress up. So I tell the others to cover for me. The same goes with our spiels and songs. If one of us is having a bum night, the others try to make up for him or her."

That, she says, is the secret of the band's success: They support and pro-

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